

PLANNING THE GARDEN FESTIVAL

1) Who's Who?

The *Regional Council* has the following functions:

Strategic planning authority (re. land occupancy), roads, education, sewerage, social work, water. They create a Structure Plan (with a large brush).

The *District Council* has the following functions:

Development control authority (deal initially with planning permission, although region can call it in if they want), housing, cleansing, leisure & recreation. Local plans describe detail. But city centre is vague: they're not keen on making parts into Conservation Areas - keener on Merchant Cities, blah blah.

D. Martin is *Director of Conservation*, J. Reid is *Director of Planning*.

The *Scottish Development Agency*, reporting to the Scottish Office, tends to be influential when they get involved in projects because they project themselves as experts, bringing in "international consultants", etc.

2) What is a Garden Festival?

The first Garden Festival was held by the Nazis, in Dortmund in the 1930s, as a job-creation measure. Since then, they have become popular among planners, architects, etc., partly as status symbol, partly because they do clear up wastelands.

Enthusiasm for them at the *English Department of the Environment* in the Eighties. The requirements which a site has to satisfy are:

- It should be derelict industrial land, close to city centre;
- The reclamation of the land should contribute to inner city redevelopment, alleviating urban blight.

These objectives became central when the "inner city problem" became seen as central. [Is Glasgow the first place to get one of these events without significant 1981 riots?]

3) Timetable of Princes Dock Change of Use.

1973 Princes Dock stopped being used for shipping.

1978 Clyde Port Authority began filling-in the dock.

1981 They applied for planning permission to do this in 1981, using an agent, D. H. Malcolm. At that time, there had been tentative plans to create a pleasure marina on the Upper Clyde, but these had been opposed by CPA as it would be an obstacle to navigation.

1982 The CPA applied for planning permission to use the land for a marina and housing. Having ascertained that there would be no hostility to such change of use, they sought out a purchaser.

1984 Ownership had passed to John Laing, although no costs, etc. are known. Other cities has seen potential in Dockland redevelopment (eg London, Bristol, Liverpool), along with Government encouragement to alleviate urban blight. Laing's appear to have foreseen such.

Interested in job creation, the District Council had tried to get 1988 Garden Festival, but on Glasgow Green, which didn't meet with the DoE requirements, whereas Princes Dock did. The Regional & District Councils also saw it as balancing their *Scottish Exhibition Centre* development on the North Bank (built using St. Enoch's Hotel rubble on the old Queens' Dock site). The Government were keen to be seen to be involved with Glasgow project, so SDA instructed to get involved. The only formal objectors to the initial plans were groups like the *New Glasgow Society* and the *Georgian Society*.

Having decided on this site, they could have served Laings with a *Compulsory Purchase Order* (which can be used in matters of public interest): the price would then have been set by the District Valuer. However, the seller can object and the process can get drawn out. So, because there wasn't enough time for such a process, they paid "rent" for temporary use of

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the site by giving Laings 6 inner-city sites (*Crookston, Aitkenhead Rd, Kirkston Rd, Foresthall Hospital, Carntyne, Springburn Rd, Colston, and area over old Kingston Dock, now built up*). This was their first compromise with private developers about public land development. This "transgression" was perceived as worthwhile because:

- Pressure would be alleviated on green belt by initiating building in the centre;
- Fashionability of inner-city housing;
- Above all, though, job creation.

However, it also meant abandoning other restructuring possibilities, planned with public use in mind, such as a long Clyde Walkway.

After the Garden Festival, Laing's will develop houses there: they seem to have, at the least, implicit planning permission for this. Meanwhile, the District Council will take 60% of trees.

4) Other Aspects of Planning in Central Glasgow.

In many ways, Glasgow is still paying the price of the postwar planning mistakes: the move of large chunks of the population out into peripheral schemes has created problems in those areas and also in the areas left behind: the future use of the old inner areas has never really been settled, and the diffusion of population means that the human limits to bureaucratic action (ie protests, etc.) are largely missing.

No decisions have been made about how the central area should be: the "Merchant City" exists as an abdication to money interests. On the South of the river, former residential areas (n Govan, etc) are turned into small Industrial Estates. Most recently, the SDA has been buying up land in the Broomielaw, which may be the next area for change. All of these developments just happen to people.

The Region closed the Tunnel because it had only 280 regular users (by region), and was therefore uneconomical to run, etc. Similarly, the ferries were discontinued. Each such move was done by salami technique. This was possibly a short term view, since housing changes would have changed use. The split of function could have blinded the two authorities to possible amenity need: the temporary bridge costs £1.7m, filling-in costs £0.7m.

The remaining rotunda buildings were listed, as a rearguard action when the closing was being considered, but the top of the northern one (now in private hands) has been deformed.

Other considerations survive: The crane that George Wyllie used for the straw locomotive remains there for possible defence use, as the only remaining crane which can lift tanks, etc. For the same reason, the Garden Festival Bridge has to be capable of being swung out, if necessary.

Notes prepared after meeting on 4th September 1987

ne material from the meeting on 4/9/87 gives us quite a lot of grounding on which this object can be built. What follows is a suggested structure for a pamphlet whose production and distribution would precede a full meeting on the subject.

Background material:

- 1.1 What is a garden festival?
Their history, home & abroad.
- 1.2 The agencies involved.
- 1.3 The Social Background.
The post-war evacuation of the cities, the consequent lack of popular control over the "revitalisation" of the inner cities.
- 1.3 The political background.
In particular, modernist Labour councils, committed to jobs-and-services, are perhaps particularly susceptible to visionary ideas hawked by specialist hucksters. See the enclosed article on *Stirling Futureworld*, for example. They are victims of a fear of being backward and desire to be enterprising.

The Changing Docklands

- 2.1 Examples from other parts of the country: Liverpool, Bristol, London (particularly, eg, the London Docklands Project).
- 2.2 The Glasgow situation.
The developments north & south of the river.

Changing Hands on Princes Dock.

- 3.1 The history of the changing ownership.
- 3.2 The trade-off.
Research needed (re Channel 4 programme, possible *Evening Times* coverage, earlier this year. Pictures of the sites traded by the council.

The Subjective Side.

- 4.1 The view from the local population.
- 4.2 The view from those in the created jobs, mainly MSC-run, low-paid.
- 4.3 The view from Liverpool about what lasting benefits accrued, if any.

Conclusions.

Whose vision of transformation? Where do the benefits go? What is a festival anyway?!

A.D.

8/9/87

Back to the future in Stirling

WITH THE departure in a southerly direction of its £25,000 a year director, Mr David MacLhose, the much-vaunted Stirling Futureworld project would appear to have run out of road.

The man behind the daring scheme was one John Cairns, chief executive of Stirling District Council when the concept was launched with a considerable fanfare of publicity in 1984. Mr Cairns left Stirling in 1985 after two years as chief executive. He is now chief executive of York City Council. He told *ArtWork*: "Futureworld was an attempt to do something about the depressed state of the part of Stirling surrounding the castle. It was a historic housing estate with a number of derelict sites through which tourists passed at great speed."

When Futureworld was launched, its glossy brochure (foreword: Magnus Magnusson) spoke of 21 major initiatives and 100 supplementary ideas which would be pursued. These included a glass escalator up the hill to the castle area and a giant glass walkway on the castle esplanade. The derelict military prison and Erskine Marykirk church were earmarked to become respectively museums of Stirling's social history and of Church history. Mr Cairns says now of the original Futureworld project:

"They were not concrete, tangible things that were to be done. The initiatives were illustrations and not tangible proposals. Not what would happen but what could happen."

Mr Cairns said that the best test of the success of Futureworld would be to look at the state of that part of Stirling three years ago and compare it now.

Anyone who does so will notice that there is no glass escalator. There is no glass walkway on the esplanade. The former military prison has had some work done inside by a MSC squad but still lies derelict. The current plan is to landscape the ground around it and turn the building into a museum of prison life with additional office space. The Erskine Marykirk church also remains derelict. Stirling District Council say they are negotiating with private investors who want to turn it into a 'Battles for Scotland' centre complete with electronic wizardry and a glass pyramid conservatory at the back for tourists to take tea and survey the plains below.

The old High School, pencilled in initially as a youth hostel, is now planned to be a four star hotel. David MacLhose says it will go ahead once the interested party Scottish Highland Ho-

tels, raises the necessary £4m finance.

The concrete, tangible achievements of Futureworld as it nears the end of its first term are: A tourist information centre; an open-top bus service for tourists; a craft shop and a dolls' museum on the road up to the castle; a coffee shop and a pub/restaurant have also opened.

Three exhibitions, including *Royalty in Scotland* currently on show at the Smith gallery, have been mounted. A number of medieval street fairs have been staged.

Councillor John Hendry, the elected member with responsibility for overseeing the Futureworld project, said that while Mr MacLhose's team would be absorbed into "the mainstream of the council" Stirling would "keep a hold of the Futureworld banner". It had been a useful exercise achieving the short-term aims of giving Stirling "a high profile in terms of its heritage and re-establishing the top of the town as a tourist attraction".

Mr Hendry said it was expected there would be an announcement soon that one of the major projects would go ahead. As Mr Cairns might put it something concrete, something tangible, is in the pipeline.

TOM SHIFF D5

it was never large enough to support them entirely. Transfers of productions to the West End were a necessary part of their economy, and the company was becoming increasingly successful. At one point in 1961 three Theatre Workshop productions were running in commercial London theatres, *The Hostage*, *A Taste of Honey* and *Fings Ain't Wot They Used T'Be*. But that meant that there was no longer a genuine Theatre Workshop company for Joan Littlewood to work with, and she stayed away until March 1963, when she began work on the highly successful *Oh What a Lovely War*. She also put her energies into promoting her idea for 'fun palaces', popular recreation parks which were to offer 'juke-box information, adult toys, star-gazing, science gadgetry, news service, tele-communication, swank promenades, hide-aways, dance-floors, drinks rallies, battles of flowers, concerts, learning machines, observation decks, nurseries, music, theatre clownery' etc. (The project came to nothing, but it anticipated the mixed-media pleasures of the underground in a way that Centre 42 did not.)

Centre 42, meanwhile, was being rushed into action in order to maintain momentum, but before it was really ready. Having decided during his imprisonment for Committee of 100 activities to commit himself fully to the project, Arnold Wesker became artistic director, and as a result he was to have little time for writing. The plan was to raise funds and establish an actual centre, a building, from which Centre 42 could operate. But before funds or building were found, there was an invitation from Wellingborough Trades Council to help them organize a festival. Trades Councils are local committees representing all the trades unions in an area, and Wesker believed that these were the best organizations to work with. As it turned out, their quality and influence varied a great deal from place to place, and real power lay with individual unions and their shop stewards, who were rarely sympathetic to anything beyond the struggle to improve wages and conditions.

Five members of Centre 42 worked for eight days in Wellingborough, and the experiment was sufficiently successful for five more Trades councils, in Leicester, Nottingham, Birmingham, Bristol, Hayes and Southall to follow Wellingborough in organizing festivals in 1962. The result was a rolling festival, with one week in each town and a week off in between. As much encouragement

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The need for funds drove Wesker unwillingly into the arms of the political and cultural Establishment. Harold Wilson had supported the scheme while in opposition, and introduced his friend George Hoskins to act as a financial adviser. When Labour won the election in October 1964 Jennie Lee became the first ever Minister for the Arts, but that did not mean that Centre 42's problems were solved. (Previously Centre 42 had survived on grants from the Gulbenkian Foundation, but had had only £200 from the Arts Council.) In December 1965 a Round House Trust was established, in order to raise funds and keep them separate from Centre 42's debts. George Hoskins became Administrator, and Robert Maxwell MP Treasurer. Wesker reluctantly agreed to a scaled-down scheme for a gradual conversion of the building, which would then operate a mixed economy of plays and commercial events like pop concerts. The pressing need, however, was for money. Wesker and Hoskins attended the 1966 Labour Party conference in order to lobby for support, and Harold Wilson suggested that his wife Mary would arrange a tea party at 10 Downing Street. After much delay and political wrangling, the party duly took place on 25 July 1967, attended by many of Labour's more wealthy supporters. £80,000 was raised, enough for the initial conversion.

Wesker's relations with the Labour establishment on which he depended gradually deteriorated. His first play for six years, *Their Very Own and Golden City* (1966), is a tacit admission of defeat. Centre 42 was in suspension, and he did not agree with the commercial exploitation of the Round House. He did not like the 'smug trustees', he had to work with, whom he thought of as 'rich thugs'. He also had a public quarrel with Jennie Lee when she sat in on a council meeting held at the House of Commons. Unable to raise money from the Arts Council, and exasperated by the trustees, Wesker had come to believe that someone was sabotaging their efforts, and said so. Challenged by Jennie Lee, he replied that she was responsible. Lee, for her part, accused him of being 'a bloody communist'. Political suspicion, and the supposed threat of Centre 42 to her own efforts as Arts Minister appear to have cost Wesker valuable support.

Centre 42 was finally wound up in 1970. Wesker's last throw was a production of a new play, *The Friends*, which he directed himself. (In 1964 he spent four months in Cuba, and returned

was given to local efforts, amateur artists exhibited alongside professionals, and so forth. Centre 42 supplied a jazz band and organized folk concerts and folk documentaries - Charles Parker's series *The Maker and the Tool*, Wesker's *The Nottingham Captain*; there were dance competitions, poetry readings in pubs and factories. The reception varied. The local press were generally enthusiastic, but the national critics were either uncomprehending or patronizing, for they were suspicious of trades union influence and what they thought was supposed to be working-class art. Centre 42 lost money.

And that, so far as the material achievements of Centre 42 are concerned, is the end of the story. Yet the history of Centre 42 is a prologue for many of the themes encountered during the 1960s, and indeed Centre 42 is bound up with one of the symbols of the Sixties, the Round House. After the 1962 festivals it was decided to wait two years before accepting any more invitations, while money was found to pay off accumulated debts and a proper base was created. Wesker was tipped off by the critic Alan Brien that the old railway-engine turning-shed in Camden, then being used as a liquor store, had been bought by the millionaire property dealer and art patron, Louis Mintz. (Mintz, for instance, was a governor of Bernard Miles's Mermaid Theatre in the City of London.) The Round House, as it was known, had obvious potential as an arts centre in a working-class district of London, but it would cost a great deal to convert. Like many artistic projects in the 1960s, the fate of Centre 42 became inextricably entangled with the fate of a building.

After lengthy negotiations, in July 1964 Louis Mintz formally handed over the sixteen years remaining on the Round House's lease to Centre 42. Architects' plans were drawn up, and Centre 42 launched an appeal, backed by some of the most prestigious names in the cultural world: Lord Harewood, Peggy Ashcroft, Benjamin Britten, Albert Finney, Graham Greene, Yehudi Menuhin, Henry Moore, Sir Laurence Olivier, John Piper, J. B. Priestley, Terence Rattigan, Sir Herbert Read, Vanessa Redgrave, Sir Carol Reed, Sir John Rothenstein. There was also support from business patrons of the arts. The appeal was for £600,000. A month later they had raised £1,600. In the following years inflation and revisions to plans raised the target to £750,000. By 1971 about £150,000 had come in from all sources.

Understanding Media

there in 1967 to direct his play, *The Four Seasons*. He wished to continue to direct his own work, and therefore refused to allow *The Friends* to be produced by a commercial management.) *The Friends*, which he had directed in Sweden in January 1970, was a flop when it opened at the Round House on 19 May. It must have been particularly mortifying that Kenneth Tynan's sex-revue *Oh Calcutta!* which followed at the Round House in July was a commercial success. In November 1970 Wesker resigned as director, and Centre 42 was officially wound up on 18 December, leaving debts of £40,000. In 1971 the Round House received its first grant from the Arts Council (other than for building work) of £7,500.

As for Wesker's original hopes for support from the TUC, the 1961 Trades Union Congress received a report from its Education Officer which concluded that there was little the TUC could or should do, except at a regional level by putting pressure on local authorities to levy the rates they were entitled to spend on cultural activities. The report was accepted, and shelved, for no money was voted to help encourage local festivals. Wesker believed that the unions had a responsibility for the society they had helped to create, and that they would act as channels of communication. He was proved wrong, for the unions were bureaucratic machines with - except in one or two rare cases - very narrow horizons.

The inability of Centre 42 to attract the funds it needed shows that even in the years of apparent cultural boom in the 1960s it was difficult to promote the genuinely unorthodox as opposed to the merely avant-garde. Wesker's chief mistake (and his idealism should not be counted as an error, however much it made for practical difficulties) was to become trapped by the pursuit of a building in which to house the activities he proposed. (In theory, the Round House was to be only the first of several centres.) But if Centre 42 was itself a failure, it was a stimulus to cultural activity in the regions, and a challenge to local authorities to undertake proper arts funding. It was a stimulus to the provision of locally supported theatres, and to the creation of arts centres. It was even a stimulus to the creation of Ministry for the Arts with which it had such poor relations. Ironically, it secured the future of the Round House as a building for the arts.

next meeting 5.00, SAT FEBRUARY 14th at CAROL RHODES', 24p 110 HILL ST., GARRETTVILLE

"affluent society" – are the loci of political conflict between the class agencies of change are temporarily contained inside the structures of the state."

In *The Drugtakers* (1971) Jock Young suggested an elaboration of the deviancy theory. He posited a process of 'amplification' through which the deviant group, once it has been identified as such, takes on and amplifies the characteristics it has been ascribed. Thus the drugtaker, who originally adopts the habit as a solution to a sense of *anomie*, finds that his alienation is only increased by the activities of the police. Yet as society's image of the drugtaker is forced upon him, he achieves an identity as a result, even if at the price of being an outsider. This identity can be strong enough to attract others, and the use of drugs becomes an ideological gesture whose meaning is actually created by its illegality. 'The drug represents for him an alternative way of life; legalization, then, is irrelevant, for it is the deviant culture surrounding the drug which is important.' As we saw in the previous chapter, in 1967 the authorities had begun a determined policy of suppressing the use of drugs, but by that time these had acquired an ideological meaning for the underground. Drug raids and prosecutions for obscenity became emblems of a 'war' between the generations.

Thus 'straight' society helped to create the monster that appeared to threaten it. The very amorphous and contradictory nature of the counter-culture made it appear all the more conspiratorial and subversive, since it was not susceptible to the normal processes of negotiation or absorption. The view from within, however, was quite different. While the whole spectrum of authority, from liberal academics to right-wing politicians was fantasized into an oppressive establishment, there was very little unity within the underground, especially between the revolutionary Left and the counter-cultural hedonists.

The contradictory pulls of the underground proved impossible to contain. In April 1970, for instance, as a sense of disillusion and defeat began to spread, the exiled Living Theater, which had long practised a politics of theatre and a theatre of politics, announced that it was dissolving into separate 'cells'. One was to disperse to Paris to pursue political activities, one to Berlin to take up environmental issues, one was to stay in London and continue cultural work, and one set off for India in search of

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anti-start. Within an hour the room, jammed with poets, painters, sculptors, publishers, novelists, psychoanalysts, sociologists, and just people was a howling underground cell of clashing ideologies and aims. The atmosphere was highly charged with dissension and mounting confusion. The difficulty was similar to that encountered at Braziers Park in 1964. The cultural, the political and the psychotherapeutic, while sharing common ground, could not agree on common forms. 'Ronnie Laing pointed out that it was futile, as Adrian Henri had suggested, to pattern ourselves on aesthetic schools such as Black Mountain or the Bauhaus or any groups whose aims were centred around some aesthetic concern, but that we could form some kind of ashram . . .'

None the less courses did start, and a genuine attempt was made to create an inter-active form of teaching which challenged both the categories of art and the hierarchy of organization which they helped to support. But ironically, the Anti-University became one of the few academic institutions destroyed by the student revolts. Roberta Elzey, who was closely involved with its administration, describes the impact of May 1968.

... students the same age as Anti-University members paralysed France. This display of naked power made a few wild with envy, and they were determined to have a revolution, any revolution. Naturally, the Anti-University was a sitting duck, since its general meeting which allowed individual voices to be heard was vulnerable to filibusters or generally obnoxious speeches which bored and drove out most other members. Although this mini-revolt fizzled out after a few weeks, it left a bad taste in many mouths, particularly as the instigators never assumed any responsibility, did any 'dirty work', paid fees or contributed to the common cause.

At first the Shoreditch building had been occupied by a number of homeless students who formed a small commune and kept the building in order. But by July 1968 the Anti-University had degenerated into a mere 'crash-pad'. 'Soon the building had the aura of a Bowery flophouse: underwear thrown about, the toilet constantly blocked, and windows broken.' A similar degeneration had taken place in the Anti-University's finances. No salaries were paid after April 1968, and in the summer the building was reclaimed by its owners. Some courses lingered on into 1969,

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spiritual malina, which undertook a fresh programme of agitational theatre in Brazil, survived into the 1970s.

However much the foregoing has suggested that we interpret the upheavals of 1967-70 symbolically, the student revolts were also a historical fact, and produced a real sense of shock in the older generation. But before tracing their course, it is worth examining the case of the Anti-University; it both exemplifies the ideology of anti-structure of the underground, and demonstrates the chaotic reality of trying to put it into practice.

As with so many aspects of the British underground, the Anti-University initiated an American example, the Free University of New York, which had been active since 1965. Two of its instigators, Allen Krebs and Joseph Berke, had been closely involved with the New York project; Berke had tried to establish a London Free School in Notting Hill Gate in 1966. The initiative for the Anti-University came from the 'Dialectics of Liberation' conference in 1967. In November of that year Krebs, Berke and David Cooper set up a group which shared their interests in radical politics, existential psychiatry and counter-cultural activities. The group – which included the poet Ed Dorn, a veteran of Black Mountain College, the feminist Juliet Mitchell and the poetry publishers Asa Benveniste and Stuart Montgomery – became an unofficial steering committee for the new alternative institution. With £350 lent by the Institute for Phenomenological Studies (part of the Philadelphia Foundation established by Cooper and R. D. Laing) a building in Shoreditch was rented from the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. (It had previously been occupied by the Vietnam Solidarity Committee.) A manifesto was issued stating that the Anti-University would 'destroy the hallowed meanings of "student", "teacher" and "course"', and 'do away with artificial splits and divisions between disciplines and art forms and between theory and action.' The advertised list of course-leaders is another roll-call of the underground, including R. D. Laing, Steve Abrams, Jim Haynes, David Cooper, Jeff Nuttall, Cornelius Cardew, Jim Dine, Barry Flanagan, Bob Cobbing, and Barry Miles.

The school opened in February 1968, but, as Harold Norse reported in *International Times*, 'the Anti-University got off to an

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Goodbye Baby and Amen

meeting in private homes, but the Anti-University had fallen victim to its own anti-structure.

The political leadership of the student revolts came from an array of extreme Left political parties, most of which hoped to fill the vacuum caused by the break-up of the Stalinist British Communist Party after 1956. The Communist Party remained in being, though it made less impact than the various Trotskyist groups who vied for dominance in the student movement: the International Socialists, founded in 1951 as a breakaway from the Revolutionary Communist Party; the Socialist Labour League, formed in 1959 and which ten years later became the Workers Revolutionary Party; and the International Marxist Group, which grew out of the journal *This Week*, launched in 1964. Besides Stalinists and Trotskyists, there were also Maoists, and a range of Anarchists and Situationists resolutely opposed to the more orthodox Marxist organizations. The existence of these groups demonstrates the marginalization of radical politics in the 1960s: the Labour Party was the party of government, and abroad there was no mass, disciplined revolutionary party which might set an example as the Russian Communist Party had done in the 1930s, until the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact. Such foreign models as there were were hardly appropriate to the British condition: the romanticized image of Cuba, third-world guerilla groups, the Vietcong, or China, whose propaganda about 'cultural revolution' and cult of youth in the Red Guards were for a time a completely misleading influence. Excluded by the consensus from influence on 'real' politics, these groups fought among themselves, further widening the gap between revolutionary ambition and achievement. An attempt by Raymond Williams, E. P. Thompson, Stuart Hall and others to regroup the elements of the New Left of 1960 around a *May Day Manifesto* in 1967 and a National Convention held in 1969 failed in the face of the political pressures at the end of the decade.

At heart, however, the political groups were trying to articulate an important social issue: people's pervading sense of isolation and alienation from mass, technocratic society. Charles Widgery – who as a member of the International Socialists and an occasional editor of *Oz* had a more comprehensive view of events

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- The "culture of silence" is born in the relationship between the Third World and the metropolis. (Cultural Action for Freedom, 1972, p80)
- In (Freire's) view, genuine theory can only be derived from some praxis rooted in historical struggle. This is the reason why Freire cannot be the theorist of social revolution in the US, although many of his readers cast him in this role. Only those who are culturally immersed in the complex forms of oppression taken by life in the US can identify the special garb worn by the "culture of silence" in this society. (Denis Goulet, "Intro" to Education: The Practice of Freedom, 1976, p x)
- The new sociology of education in the US develops themes of reproduction quite distinct from Freire's account of production. (Henry Giroux, Intro, Politics of Ed)
- The notion of emancipatory literacy suggests two dimensions of literacy. On the one hand, students have to become literate about their histories, experiences, and the culture of their immediate environments. On the other hand, they must also appropriate those codes and cultures of the dominant spheres so they can transcend their own environments. There is an enormous tension between these two dimensions of literacy. How can emancipatory literacy deal effectively with this tension so as not to suffocate either dimension? (Donaldo Macedo in Macedo and Freire, Literacy: Reading the Word and the World, 1987, p 47)

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- from Sao Tome and Principe's Popular Culture Exercise Workbooks:

To practice always to learn
and
to learn in order to practice better.

Let's read:

Hoe
Sowing
Source
Knowledge

Productive work is the source of knowledge. With the hoe we prepare the fields for sowing and we help to build a new country.

Our children should learn by working.
Our schools should be schools of work.

Try to write about the text that you just read.

Write just as you speak. It is by practicing that one learns.

(ibid, p 71)

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- from A Pedagogy for Liberation, Dialogues with Ira Shor (1987):

The question is not for the teacher to have less and less authority. The issue is that the democratic teacher never, never transforms authority into authoritarianism. He or she can never stop being an authority or having authority. Without authority it is very difficult for the liberties of the students to be shaped. Freedom needs authority to become free. (Laughs) It is a paradox but it is true. The question nevertheless is for authority to know that it has its foundation in the freedom of others, and if the authority denies this and cuts off this relationship, this founding relationship, with freedom, I think that it is no longer authority but has become authoritarianism. As well, if the freedom side of the dialectic does not meet authority because authority renounces itself, the tendency is for freedom to stop being freedom and become license. In both cases, we cannot speak about democracy, we cannot speak about discipline, we cannot speak about creation, democratic re-creation of society, no. We have license from below and we have imposition from above. (p 91)

- PAULO FREIRE 1921-

- from Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 1972:

- In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. The teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence. The students, alienated like the slave in the Hegelian dialectic, accept their ignorance as justifying the teacher's existence --- but, unlike the slave, they never discover that they educate the teacher. (pp 58-59)

- "Banking" education involves:

- (i) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about
- (ii) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, the students comply
- (iii) the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the teacher
- (iv) the teacher chooses content, and students (who were not consulted) adapt
- (v) the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority, which he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students
- (vi) the teacher is Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects

- For the rightist sectarian, "today", linked to the past, is something given and immutable; for the leftist sectarian, "tomorrow" is decreed beforehand, is inexorably pre-ordained. This rightist and leftist are both reactionary because, starting from their respectively false views of history, both develop forms of action which negate freedom ... both types ... end up without the people -- which is another way of being against them. (p 23)

- Liberation, a human phenomenon, cannot be achieved by semihumans ... The correct method for a revolutionary leadership to employ is, therefore, not "libertarian propaganda." ... The correct method lies in dialogue. The conviction of the oppressed that they must fight for their liberation is not a gift bestowed by the revolutionary leadership, but the result of their own conscientizacao. (p 54)

- In ... (a) ... discussion, the group was debating whether the conscientizacao of men to a specific situation of injustice might not lead them to "destructive fanaticism" or to a "sensation of total collapse of their world." In the midst of the argument, a man who had previously been a factory worker for many years spoke out: "Perhaps I am the only one here of working-class origin. I can't say that I've understood everything you've said just now, but I can say one thing --- when I began this course I was naive, and when I found out how naive I was, I started to get critical. But this discovery hasn't made me a fanatic, and I don't feel any collapse either." (p 20)

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- Recognizing the permanent tension between teacher and learner as reconcilable and not antagonistic qualifies us as democratic educators, not elitists and authoritarians. (The Politics of Education, 1985, p 177)

- In the critical view ... the act of looking implies another, that of admiring. We admire, and in our looking deeply into what we admire, we look inward and from within; this makes us see. In the naive view (our "unarmed" way of confronting reality), we merely look but we cannot see, because we don't admire what we look at in its intimacy ... It is important that we admire the words of our proposed theme [THE SOCIAL WORKER'S ROLE IN THE PROCESS OF CHANGE] so in looking at them from the inside we can recognise that they ought not to be dealt with as a mere cliché. (ibid, pp 37-38)

THE POLL TAX

With effect from April 1st 1989, Domestic Rates will be replaced by a Community Charge per adult. A register of those liable to pay this charge will need to be created. This is the responsibility of the Regional Assessor; since 14th September, Assessors have also become Community Charge Registration Officers. This register will be based on the Electoral Register (hence the popular name of "Poll Tax"), topped-up by reference to Library membership lists, Education Dept. lists of people reaching 18, etc. The penalty for not registering will be up to £200.

There will be three Community Charges:

- 1) The **Personal Community Charge**, payable by all a district's residents who are aged 18 or over. Payment will be due from date of taking-up residence to date of removal. Those in full-time education will assessed at their term-time residence and are liable for 20% of the charge.
- 2) The **Standard Community Charge**, payable on second homes, on a similar basis to the Personal Charge. However, each Council will set the charge as a multiplier of between one and two times the Personal Charge.
- 3) The **Collective Community Charge**, payable on properties such as hostels, calculated as a number of Personal Charges, as assessed by the Registration Officer.

Because the Charge is due monthly, the Register will have to be continually updated; it has been estimated that there will be 800,000 changes per annum. Each person will probably be allocated an Identity Number within the system. The National Insurance Number would probably have been used if it was automatically allocated at age 18 and if it was less abstract from an individual's details (unlike the Drivers' Number).

People will probably be issued with a Payments Book. The collection arrangements are being left to the Regions & Districts (although the Secretary of State has interventionist powers in this, as in many other aspects). The Regional Council is the Levying or Charging Authority; it will probably keep the Register and issue the bills. Collection will probably be via Region or District Council Offices, or by Standing Order (like the Rates). Council tenants will no longer be able to pay along with the rent, although it could be arranged that the Community Charge has the same due date.

Non-payment will result in surcharge. Recovery of unpaid charges can be done through wage arrest, poinding / sale, arrestment and forthcoming or sale.

Rebate details have still to be worked out. However, like the new Housing Benefit arrangements applicable from April 1st 1988, everyone will have to pay a minimum of 20%. The Regions and Districts have still to work out how they will administer benefit; obviously they will want to minimise the paper and people shuffling.

The aim of the legislation is to make councils economically accountable to their electorate. It is hoped that the chill wind of the economy can be made to blow down the necks of any council which tries to deform market forces by operating as a project funding body (as did the GLC). This market "virtue" doesn't extend to the operation of the Charge itself. Collection of £4 monthly instalments from claimants is going to be hardly more economically "rational" than the Dog Licence.

The Secretary of State will retain his powers of Selective Action against "overspending" councils. Schedule 4 of the *Abolition of Domestic Rates (Scotland) Act* allows the Secretary of State to alter any Local Authority's Grant "by reference to such factors as he determines". This retention of discretionary power is powerful because:

- a) The level of Non-Domestic Rates (which are being retained) is under Government control.
- b) The Government control grants.
- c) At changeover, the new charge will bring in approx. 20% of council income, so any attempt by a council to recoup reduced grants from the Community Charge would be magnified (eg -£1 in grant requires +£4 in Community Charge).

Until recently, Scottish Regional and District Councils had a policy of non-cooperation with the introduction of the new Charge, a policy dropped when the regulations concerning the collecting mechanisms came into force in early September this year. Prior to then, however, particularly before the Bill became law, many estimated the different effects which the Charge would have on families in their localities and about the extra staff which would be required to operate the system. Taking Edinburgh as an example, some of the estimated changes in the amount payable by average households in various districts were:

Prestonfield	£512 Domestic Rates	£268 Community Charge
St. Giles	£366 Domestic Rates	£727 Community Charge
Holyrood	£358 Domestic Rates	£626 Community Charge

One of the few district wards to obtain a substantial average profit from the Community Charge would be Murrayfield. As for operating the system, it has been estimated that Strathclyde Region will require 260 additional staff and 100 assessors; once development of systems is taken into account, the cost will be £13.7m per annum.

A.D.

Prepared from various sources, 8/10/87

6 Workers' Films: Scotland's Hidden Film Culture

DOUGLAS ALLEN

Any idea of a 'popular film culture' in Scotland usually revolves round two themes. One is the film record of 'popular' music-hall comedians and stars like Harry Lauder and Will Wyke, with their propagation of the 'tartan myth'. The other is the work of the documentary movement of the 1930s, which put 'the people' on the screen for the first time, with a mixture of social problem exposés and lyrical pictures of the working class. Grierson and key Scottish and Scottish socialists such as Harry Watt, Stewart McLaren, John Taylor and Norman McLaren were only the peak of a mass of film talent which left a depressed but politically active Scotland to enrich the documentary movement down south. Only on the occasional return visit north did they depict the Scottish scene in films like *The Face of Scotland* and *Wealth of a Nation*.

What has been neglected, though, is a third theme of popular Scottish film – the film culture of Scotland's socialist movement, which flourished in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. Such was the coherence, and the common aims and aspirations of this movement, that one is justified in describing it as a complete 'socialist counter-culture'. Expressions of a similar consciousness are discernible in groups such as the nineteenth-century German Social Democrats and the turn-of-the-century British Clarion movement, with their ethos of art, culture and sport as a means of escape from the harsh realities of working-class life. In Scotland, and especially the West of Scotland, this socialist counter-culture took the form of a network of clubs and institutions engaging in drama, literature, music, field sports, swimming and even rambling – all in the name of socialism. One important component of this counter-culture from the late twenties was the cinema.

There were two stages in the development of this film culture – a period from the late twenties through the thirties and forties of film-viewing, and, arising from this, a period in the late thirties of film-making.

The film-viewing side was composed of three distinct elements: first, the screening of the best of world socialist cinema by Workers' Film Societies; second, the more agitational use of film as propaganda during public rallies and fund-raising tours; and third, the screening of political films in commercial public cinemas.

The Workers' Film Society movement in Scotland, as in London, was an offshoot of the film society movement. The aim was the same: to bring 35mm, prints of banned Soviet films to the working class by showing them in cinemas on Sundays under club membership conditions. Workers' Film Societies appeared first in 1930 in Edinburgh, then in Dundee and St Andrews; but the most fertile ground was in Glasgow. A series of societies succeeded each other through the early thirties: the Glasgow Workers' Film Society (1930–1); the New Art Film Society (1931–3); the Film Section of the USSR Society (1932–3); and the West of Scotland Workers' Film Society (1934–5). Each showed films, usually on a monthly basis, in cinemas in working-class districts of the city. Annual membership ranged from 7/6d to 12/- for 8 to 10 showings, with half-price for the unemployed. The films shown were usually the standard Soviet classics of Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Dzovhenko (as well as the occasional showing of Vertov's more unconventional *Man with a Movie Camera*), supported by documentary shorts on Soviet life.

The main reason for the swift turnover in Workers' Film Societies seems to have been the strict licensing regulations. These laid down a complex membership system involving the advance purchase of tickets from a recognised number of agents, usually local shop-keepers. The problems of this system can be appreciated on examining the minutes of Glasgow Corporation when, within a month in 1933, two Workers' Film Societies were closed down when the licensing council heard police reports of membership infringements.

This proved to be a precursor of a problem in the late thirties when the last of the pre-war Workers' Film Societies was formed, the Scottish People's Film Association (SPFA). Sunday showings now took place in major city such as Glasgow, probably reflecting the more 'respectable' nature of such an organisation in the era of the popular front crusade against fascism. Now everyone from the new Labour-controlled Corporation downwards was united in support of anti-socialist evening shows. The internationalism of the SPFA was shown by the acceptance of the position of Honorary President by Paul Robeson, one of Glasgow's most welcome frequent visitors during this era.

By the post-war years, Workers' Film Societies were an accepted part of Glasgow life. Organisations such as the People's Film Society, Glasgow Unity Theatre Film Society and the Clydeide Film Society continued the tradition of bringing the best of world socialist cinema to the working class, until their demise by the mid fifties.

It was the massive popular front sentiment in Glasgow which gave rise to the second component of Glasgow's film-viewing culture – the agitational use of film to back up political public meetings. Chief exponent of this use of film was the Glasgow Kino Group, the Scottish branch of the London Kino, who from 1933 had been showing and making working-class films. The staple material on offer from Kino groups up and down the country was again Soviet classics, but this time with the vital difference that most prints were on the new 'safe' 16mm film, which gained exemption from licensing regulations.

The Glasgow Kino Group first appeared in 1935, hiring out Soviet films from Collier's Bookshop. But their showing of the propaganda documentary *Free Thaelmann!* at anti-fascist meetings through 1935 and 1936 was indicative of the direction the group would take over the next few years. For it was the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 which created a mass audience for anti-fascist propaganda and information films, and Kino became the chief outlet for the latest news from Spain in films such as *Defence of Madrid* and *Spanish Earth*. Giving shows often five nights per week, the group toured Central Scotland attending virtually every left-wing event in the late thirties from May Day celebrations, through hunger march receptions, to prestigious Paul Robeson concerts for Spain. Resources stretched occasionally to city centre cinema showings of 35mm prints such as *They Shall Not Pass*, for gain to raise sympathy and money for Spain. Records show the group's kings to be often as much as £100 per week, and at one point they received the thanks of Senor Azcarate, the Spanish Ambassador to Britain.

An interesting insight to Glasgow life is shown by the third component of Glasgow's socialist film-viewing culture, commercial cinema showings. Contemporary newspapers record that the Orient Cinema, Gallowgate, in the heart of the working-class East End, occasionally showed among its traditional Hollywood fare films with titles such as *Soviet Russia* (3-day showing February 1933); *Whither Germany?* (perhaps *Kuhle Wampe*, 3-day showing March 1934); and *Moscow – Heart of Soviet Russia* (3-day showing April 1934). Whether audiences came in quite the same numbers as they came to see Clark Gable is not known, but even the appearance of such films in such a context is remarkable.

In Scotland, as elsewhere, the working-class movement regarded film-viewing as only a preliminary to film-making. The constitutions of most Workers' Film Societies from the Edinburgh Workers' Progressive Film Society to the SPFA included among their aims '... to encourage the production of films of value to the working class ('workers' or '... to produce 16mm. documentaries on Scottish culture' (SPFA). No evidence survives of any of these aspirations being fulfilled. The only film records of Scottish working-class activities at this time seem to have been shot by workers' film teams from the south (such as the Workers' Topical Newsreel on the 1930 Hunger March).

It wasn't until the mid-thirties that film-making activities began, thanks to the Kino Group. This came about due to Kino's absorption of two remarkable talents from the Glasgow School of Art – Helen Biggar and Norman McLaren. Their award-winning amateur films had established for them a local reputation as experimental film-makers of note; and their growing politicisation through the thirties was giving their films and scripts for proposed films an increasingly hard edge. This culminated in 1936 with the production of *Hell Unlimited*, a pacifist propaganda piece notable for its rejection of documentary realism in favour of a montage of fantasy, surrealism, animation and agit-prop. The film was taken up for distribution by Kino, and an association began between Biggar, McLaren and Glasgow Kino. With McLaren's subsequent departure for London to join the GPO Film Unit, most of the Glasgow Kino work was Biggar's: film of the Scottish contingent of the 1936 Hunger March for the Film & Photo League's *March Against Starvation*; an unrealised project surrounding the workers' occupation of a Borders textile factory; and a film of the 1937 May Day march in Glasgow. It was this latter event which inspired the only other major Kino production, *Challenge to Fascism*, a film record of the 1938 May Day march in Glasgow. Money was raised from the labour movement through appeals in the local labour press; and a team of film-makers under Biggar shot the march and specially staged sequences of a typical Glasgow family (played by members of the Glasgow Workers' Theatre Group) attending the festivities. The film was shown at evening sessions such as the 1939 May Day celebrations, but by that time the imminent fall of Spain and outbreak of world war had taken much of the impetus out of the movement. Thereafter Helen Biggar was to devote most of her talents to designing for Glasgow Unity Theatre. Kino returned to its function as a film-showing body, with its equipment eventually ending up at Glasgow's Soviet Aid Shop, showing Soviet war-time propaganda films.

After the war there was no major revival of film-making activities to accompany the prestigious rise of Glasgow Unity Theatre. The only local film appears to have been *Let Glasgow Flourish*, a production of the Clydeide Film Society in the early fifties which looked at Glasgow's housing problem within the traditional documentary format. From there on, Scottish popular film culture was on the decline, along with the general decline of the socialist counter-culture in the years of fifties prosperity.

Looking back at this activist era of the twenties, thirties and forties how can we sum up this largely forgotten popular film culture? What brought about the phenomenon at that particular time, in that particular form and with those particular results? A number of significant points emerge.

The first thing to emphasise would be the solid local base from which the film culture emerged, the all-embracing socialist counter-culture in which working-class and sympathetic middle-class intellectuals met, discussed, debated, planned, acted and relaxed. Within this world, film was just one of many means of communication and morale-boosting – the latest, most technological, and potentially most powerful and far-reaching. The ideal of a network of Workers' Film Societies viewing and making workers' newsreels, documentaries and features was attempted, but never quite attained, certainly not to the extent of another medium of communication within the counter-culture, the theatre.

Second is the educational element. The counter-culture was part of the great movement of working-class self-education, the desire to absorb the received knowledge and classics of the established political and artistic world (both bourgeois and 'progressive'). Hours of unemployment spent in local libraries made members of the workers' theatre experts on world drama – Shaw, O'Neill, O'Casey and Odeus. Similar attention to the classics of world cinema showed this same desire for a grounding in the received world of art as a preliminary to the creating of a local, indigenous, working-class art. In film as in theatre in Glasgow, this extended to an initial grappling with Marxist theories of art, as can be seen from the articles, discussions and letters in the local socialist journals.

Third is the question of the technology of the movement, what we would now call the 'hardware'. Here the film culture faced vast problems compared with the relative cheapness and mobility of live drama. The problems and expense of handling film cameras, film stock, projectors, reels and screens put extra difficulties in the way of any pioneering film culture, let alone one operating in the penurious world of socialist politics. In Glasgow traditional methods were used to surmount these problems, the 'scrounging' of equipment by those members who had access to it, and the raising of finance from sympathetic 'establishment' figures, trade union and socialist subscriptions.

Fourth is the national – indeed world-wide – context in which the culture operated, the events which gave sustenance and inspiration to political activism. Here, interestingly enough, it was international events such as the Russian Revolution, anti-fascism and the Spanish Civil War which seemed to provide a stronger focus than more immediate local issues such as unemployment.

What reasons can we offer to justify looking at this forgotten culture? Can it have anything to say to our sophisticated, 'classless', highly educated, nuclear and video technology world, where only unemployment may seem to be a common factor?

One reason is precisely because the culture is half-forgotten. It is a key demonstration of the process of history by which those who challenge the dominant notions of the time are left largely unrecorded for posterity. Thus the acts of thousands of hard-working, dedicated activists are left unheralded and unused, necessitating emergency historical rescue operations to allow the tribute that it is due them to be paid.

But perhaps a more important reason is the implications it holds for those who look today for the revival of a popular Scottish film culture, one that goes beyond the music-hall image of Billy Connolly and the social problem exposés of the BBC's *Play for Today*. Is there a suitable base from which to work, a network of support groups, people with common values and aims willing to dedicate themselves to a cause? Is education playing its role, teaching people the techniques, history and theory of the particular art form, giving people the opportunity to develop and express themselves and their culture? Are the technological means available, the hardware cheap and accessible, and finance on hand to allow talents to stay within the local context yet still absorb international influences through travel and visits? Is the political motivation there, the issues that will arouse and inspire people to become engaged in political and cultural activism?

Many people will recognise that most of these elements are present in our contemporary culture, but are there any signs or prospects of them merging as a coherent and active counter-culture?

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SOVIET AND LEFT FILM SHOWS IN GLASGOW

Seasons

- 1929–30 Glasgow Film Society (GFS): *End of St Petersburg*.
1930–1 GFS: *Storm Over Asia*, *The Battleship Potemkin*, at Gem, Great Western Road.
Glasgow Workers' Film Society: three or four films in Louvre, Duke Street, Parkhead; *The Battleship Potemkin*, *Earth*, *Spartakus*, *Glimpses of Modern Russia*; *Mother* in three-day run at City Hall.
1931–2 GFS: *Mutter Krausen Fahrt ins Glück* at Gem; *The Blue Express*.
New Art Cinema Club: three or four films at King's (Charing Cross); *The Blue Express*.
1932–3 GFS: *Kuhle Wampe* at King's.
New Art Cinema Club: Soviet films at E. E. Picture House, Eglinton Street (no trace after December 1932).
Film Section of Scottish USSR Society, Glasgow Branch: fortnightly shows at Gem, then Seamore, Maryhill Road; *Soviet Five Year Plan*, *Spartakus*, *The Battleship Potemkin*, *Man With a Movie Camera*, *Shanghai*, *Alone*. Shows closed down by authorities January 1933.
Orient Kinema, Sword Street, Gallowgate: three-day showing of *Soviet Russia* February 1933.

- 1933–4 Orient Kinema: three-day showing of *Kuhle Wampe* and *Whither Germany*, March, and three-day showing of *Moscow, Heart of Soviet Russia*, April.
GFS: *The Road To Life*, showings at Cranston's.

- 1934–5 Workers' Film Society (West of Scotland): five or six films at Grand Central, Jamaica Street; *The Road to Life*, *War Is Hell*, *Storm Over Asia*, *The Blue Express*.

- 1935–6 GFS: *End of St Petersburg*.
Glasgow Kino Group: films for hire include *Ten Days That Shook The World*, *New Babylon*, showings *Ten Days That Shook The World* (King's), *Free Thaelmann!* (St Andrews Hall), *New Babylon* (Masonic Halls, W. Regent Street), *Ten Days That Shook The World* (by Progressive Club at Keir Hardie Institute), *Three Songs of Lenin* (by Glasgow Scouts at Collicum).

- 1936–7 Glasgow Kino Film Group (based at Workers' Club, George Street): tours with 16mm. Spanish War films, including *Defence of Madrid*; shows of 16mm. Spanish and Soviet films at Lyric, Christian Institute; *The Road To Life*, *New From Spain*, *Hey Rup* (Czech); 35mm. show at Cranston's of *They Shall Not Pass*.
1937–8 Glasgow Kino Film Group: tour with Spanish *Earth*, etc. in charge of shows for local Labour Party branches; *Road To Life*, *Mother*, *New Babylon*, *Millions Like Us* (Dixon Halls); shows of 35mm. films at Cranston's and Grand Central.

- GFS: *We From Kronstadt*.
Proletarian Film Guild: John Maclean festivals summer 1937.
Scottish People's Film Association (SPPA): formed March 1938, showing in Grand Central (35mm.) of *We From Kronstadt*, *Land Without Bread*, *The New Gulliver*.
1938–9 SPPA: *Lenin in October*, *If War Should Come*, *The Battleship Potemkin*.

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For the Free University Network Meeting on Ivan Illich

Ivan Illich was born in Vienna in 1926. Having studied crystallography, theology, philosophy and history, he went to the USA in 1951 as a priest. Later he co-founded the Center for InterCultural Documentation in Cuernavaca, Mexico. More recently, he has taught Medieval History in Germany. These extracts from his books are intended to give a brief introduction to his work.

Celebration of Awareness (Collected articles, 1971)

From 1951 to 1956 I lived as a priest in Incarnation Parish on the West Side of New York's Manhattan. Puerto Ricans were then being crowded into the walk-ups between Amsterdam Avenue and Broadway. (p29) Five years on the streets of New York made me aware of the need for some method of bringing native New Yorkers to friendship with Puerto Ricans. I saw how intensely Puerto Ricans rejected the American who studied them for the purpose of *integrating* them in the city. (p39)

In 1960 Pope John XXIII enjoined all United States and Canadian religious superiors to send, within 10 years, 10% of their effective strengths in priests and nuns to Latin America. I was convinced that it would do serious damage to those sent, to their clients and to their sponsors back home. The transfer of United States living standards and expectations could only impede the revolutionary changes needed, and the use of the gospel in the service of capitalism or any other ideology was wrong. With two friends. I set up a centre in Cuernavaca. (p47)

Underdevelopment as a form of consciousness is an extreme result of what we call in the language of both Marx and Freud *Verdinglichung* or reification. By reification I mean the hardening of the perception of real needs into the demand for mass manufactured products. Underdevelopment is the result of rising levels of aspiration achieved through the intensive marketing of 'patent' products. (p136)

Deschooling Society (1971)

Many students, especially those who are poor, intuitively know what the schools do for them. They school them to confuse process and substance. Once these become blurred, a new logic is assumed: the more treatment there is, the better are the results; or, escalation leads to success. The pupil is thereby 'schooled' to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education. His imagination is 'schooled' to accept service in place of value. Medical treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military poise for national security, the rat race for productive work. (p9)

Welfare bureaucracies claim a professional, political and financial monopoly over the social imagination, setting standards of what is valuable and what is feasible. This monopoly is at the root of the modernisation of poverty. Every simple need to which an institutional answer is found permits the invention of a new class of poor and a new definition of poverty. (p11)

Institutional wisdom tells us that children need school. Institutional wisdom tells us that children learn in school. But this institutional wisdom is itself the product of schools because sound common sense tells us that only children can be taught in school. Only by segregating human beings in the category of childhood could we ever get them to submit to the authority of a schoolteacher. (p35)

School, by its very nature, tends to make a total claim on the time and energies of its participants. This, in turn, makes the teacher into a custodian, preacher and therapist. (p37)

(Discussing educational credits proposals:) Such individual entitlements could indeed be an important step in the right direction. We need a guarantee of the right of each citizen to an equal share of tax-derived educational resources. It is one form of a guarantee against regressive taxation. The proposal condemns itself by proposing tuition grants which would

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have to be spent on schooling. (It) plays into the hands not only of the professional educators but of racists, promoters of religious schools and others whose interests are socially divisive. The deschooling of society implies a recognition of the two-faced nature of learning. An insistence on skill drill alone could be a disaster; equal emphasis must be placed on other kinds of learning. But if schools are the wrong place for learning a skill, they are even worse places for getting an education. (p24)

After Deschooling, What? (1973)

An expanded understanding of alienation would enable us to see that in a service-centred economy man is estranged from what he can 'do' as well as from what he can 'make', that he has delivered his mind and heart over to therapeutic treatment. Even more completely than he has sold the fruits of his labour.

Tools for Conviviality (1973)

During the next several years I intend to work on an epilogue to the industrial age. I want to trace the changes in language, myth, ritual and law which took place in the current epoch of packaging and of schooling. I want to describe the fading monopoly of the industrial mode of production and the vanishing of the industrially generated professions this mode of production serves. (p9)

To formulate a theory about a future society both very modern and not dominated by industry, it will be necessary to recognise natural scales and limits. Once these limits are recognised, it becomes possible to articulate the triadic relationship between persons, tools, and a new collectivity. Such a society, in which modern technologies serve politically interrelated individuals rather than managers, I will call *convivial*. I have chosen *convivial* as a technical term to designate a modern society of responsibly limited tools. (p12)

I choose the term *conviviality* to designate the opposite of industrial productivity. I intend it to mean autonomous and creative intercourse among persons and the intercourse of persons with their environment; and this in contrast with the conditioned response of persons to the demands made upon them by others and by a manmade environment. (We) need procedures to ensure that control over the tools of society are established and governed by political process rather than by decisions by experts. (p24-25)

By *radical monopoly* I mean the dominance of one type of product rather than the dominance of one brand. I speak about radical monopoly when one industrial production process exercises an exclusive control over the satisfaction of a pressing need, and excludes nonindustrial activities from competition. Cars can thus monopolize traffic. They can shape a city into their image. Of course cars burn gasoline that could be used to make food. Of course they are dangerous and costly. But the radical monopoly cars establish is destructive in a special way. Cars create distance. Speedy vehicles of all kinds render space scarce. This monopoly over land turns space into car fodder. Schools tried to extend a radical monopoly on learning by redefining it as education. As long as people accepted the teacher's definition of reality, those who learned outside school were officially stamped 'uneducated'. Modern medicine deprives the ailing of care not prescribed by doctors. Radical monopoly imposes compulsory consumption and thereby restricts personal autonomy. The current debate over health-care delivery in the United States clearly illustrates the entrenchment of a radical monopoly. Each political party in the debate makes sick-care a burning public issue and thereby relegates health care to an area about which politics has nothing important to say. Each party promises more funds to doctors, hospitals and drugstores. Such promises are not in the interests of the majority. They only serve to increase the power of a minority of professionals. (p66-67)

Limits to Medicine - Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health (1976)

The medical establishment has become a major threat to health. The disabling impact of professional control has reached the proportions of an epidemic (*Iatrogenesis*). Limits to professional health care are a rapidly-growing political issue. Politicians who have proposed the emulation of the Russian, Swedish or English models of socialized medicine are

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embarrassed that recent events show their pet systems to be highly efficient in producing the same pathogenic ... cures and cures that capitalist medicine, albeit with less equal access, produces. The recovery from society-wide iatrogenic disease is a political task, not a professional one. It must be based on a grassroots consensus about the balance between the civil liberty to heal and the civil right to equitable health care. During the last generations the medical monopoly over health care has expanded without checks and has encroached on our liberty with regard to our own bodies. Society has transferred to physicians the exclusive right to determine what constitutes sickness, who is or might become sick, and what shall be done to such people. Deviance is now 'legitimate' only when it merits and ultimately justifies medical interpretation. (p11-13)

Built-in iatrogenesis now affects all social relations. It is the result of internalized colonisation of liberty by affluence. In rich countries medical colonization has reached sickening proportions; poor countries are quickly following suit. (The siren of one ambulance can destroy Samaritan attitudes in a whole Chilean town.) This process, which I shall call the medicalisation of life, deserves articulate political recognition. Medicine could become a prime target for political action that aims at an inversion of industrial society. (p15-16)

The modern medical enterprise represents an endeavour to do for people what their genetic and cultural heritage formerly equipped them to do for themselves. Medical civilization is planned and organised to kill pain, to eliminate sickness, and to abolish the need for an art of suffering and of dying. This progressive flattening-out of personal, virtuous performance constitutes a new goal which has never before been a guideline for social life. Suffering, healing and dying, which are essentially intransitive activities that culture taught each man are now claimed by technocracy as new areas for policy-making, and are treated as malfunctions from which populations ought to be institutionally relieved. (p138)

Shadow Work (1981)

Looking at early-19th century history, I find that with the progress of monetarization, a non-monetarised and complementary hemisphere comes into existence. With the rise of this shadow economy, I observe the appearance of a kind of toll which is not rewarded by wages, and yet contributes nothing to the household's independence from the market. In fact, this new kind of activity, for which the shadow work of the housewife in her new non-subsistent domestic sphere (is) one prime example, is a necessary condition for the family wage-earner to exist. Thus shadow-work, which is as recent a phenomenon as modern wage-labour, might be even more fundamental than the latter for the continued existence of a commodity-intensive society. (p1-2)

Ten years ago, attitudes towards development and politics were simpler than what is possible today; attitudes towards work were sexist and naïve. Work was identified with employment and prestigious employment confined to males. The analysis of shadow work done off the job was taboo. The left referred to it as a remnant of primitive reproduction, the right as organised consumption - all agreed that, with development, such labour would wither away. (p13)

The great Mexican muralists dramatically portrayed the typical figures before the theorists outlined the stages. On their walls, one sees the ideal type of human being as the male in overalls behind a machine or in a white coat over a microscope. He tunnels mountains, guides tractors, fuels smoking chimneys. Women give him birth, nurse and teach him. In striking contrast to Aztec subsistence, Rivera and Orozco visualise industrial work as the sole source of all the goods needed for life and its possible pleasures. But this ideal of industrial man now dims. (p16)

The native was the crucial concept to promote self-righteous colonial rule. But by the time of the Marshall Plan (after WW2), when multinational conglomerates were expanding and the ambitions of transnational pedagogues, therapists and planners knew no bounds, the natives' limited needs for goods and services thwarted growth and progress. They had to metamorphose into underdeveloped people. Thus decolonization was also a process of conversion: the worldwide acceptance of the Western self-image of *homo economicus* in his most extreme form as *homo industrialis*, with all needs commodity-defined. (p19)

Gender-specific tasks are not new; all known societies assign sex-specific work rôles. But no matter how we search other cultures, we cannot find the contemporary division between two forms of work, one paid and the other unpaid, one credited as productive and the other concerned with reproduction and consumption. one given high social prestige and the other relegated to 'private' matters. Both are equally fundamental to the industrial mode of production. they differ in that the surplus from paid work is taxed directly by the employer, while the added value of unpaid work reaches him only via wage work. Nowhere can we find this economic division of the sexes through which surplus is created and expropriated. (p21-22)

Gender (1983)

...I learned to distinguish *vernacular speech*, into which we grow through daily intercourse with people who speak their own minds, from *taught mother tongue*, which we acquire through professionals employed to speak for and to us. Key words are a characteristic of taught mother tongue. They are even more effective than the mere standardization of the vocabulary and grammatical rules in their repression of the vernacular because, having the appearance of a common sense, they put a pseudo-vernacular gloss on engineered reality. I have found that the paramount characteristic of key words in all languages is their exclusion of gender. (p7-8)

As polio and diphtheria have almost disappeared, so has the exclusion of girls from grammar and high schools. Just as we have seat belts to protect us against crashes, so we have TV monitors to protect us against rape. Just as we have affirmative action for the health of the poor, so we have special scholarships to get women to the top. It is hard to face the fact that no program whatsoever has changed either average life expectancy or the wage differential between the sexes. (p28-9)

Unlike the production of goods and services, shadow work is performed by the consumer of commodities, specifically, the consumer household. I call shadow work any *labour* by which the consumer transforms a purchased commodity into a usable good. the time, toil and effort that must be expended in order to add to any purchased commodity the value without which it is unfit for use. (p49)

Shadow work is not woman's exclusive domain. It is as clearly genderless as wage labour. Unpaid work to upgrade industrial production is done by males too. The husband who crams for an exam on a subject he hates, solely to get a promotion; the man who commutes every day to the office - these men are engaged in shadow work. In shadow work much more intensely than in wage labour, women are discriminated against. they are tied to more of it, they must spend more time on it, they have less opportunity to avoid it. (p53)

Pre-capitalist societies are based on gender. Subsistence is a neutral term for this gendered survival. Societies in which the reign of gender has broken down are capitalist; their genderless subjects are individual producers. (p170)

Robert Kuowles sees the appointment of Hungary's new leader as a triumph for the apparatchiks

Budapest

WHEN the Western mind considers East-European politics, it is often inclined to see it as a spectacle of mental models is pitifully inadequate to the task. It is an interest in reforms of any kind is immediately compared to Mr. Gorbachev; any independent movement of workers or intellectuals is instantly likened to Solidarity. The Western mind is not aware of the average basic terms such as 'politics' and 'public opinion' start to shift and lose their meaning as soon as they are applied to a communist state. But that does not mean that the alternatives you are left with are those of the West. In Hungary, the new leader is a man who has been in the country for 10 years, and has been described at best as an old-fashioned centralist and at worst as a neo-Stalinist — someone who believes in the central Party control of economic life. Since he became leader, he has been the only one in the country who has been able to bring up a little with the Western-style programme of graduated personal taxation, VAT, the promotion of trade with Western Europe and the closing of loss-making factories. But the whole of Hungary is designed to make the central government's policy of economic reform to change it into a different kind of system. One economist I spoke to began by calling Grosz a 'technocrat', but then he corrected himself: 'That isn't quite the right word, because it suggests some sort of highly educated expert, a kind of "enlightened technocrat" who is not a politician. It is not accurate.'

Looked at in terms of the new politics, the overthrow of Dr. Kadar is almost the opposite of a reaction against the old Party machinery. It is the triumph of the Party machinery. The new Central Committee (the 100-strong body which is in effect the Politburo) has a membership more heavily dominated by apparatchiks than at any time since the 1950s — as one dissident deliciously described it, they are the squirearchy of communist society. On the Politburo (the Central Committee) the new leader, Mr. Grosz's followers is absolute, and the most striking change is simply that one generation has been pushed aside at last by the generation below it.

The policy statement issued by the Politburo last weekend, which stands for the time being as a manifesto for the new régime, was remarkable above all for its blandness. No major new policies were promised, and in the new economy there was only one phrase which was new, and which was a phrase referring vaguely to the need

twinkle in his eye. 'The only genuinely socialist mass movement in European history', there was more socialism, too, in its sudden growth of workers' councils in the factories.

'I was talking the other day', Mr. Tamas told me, 'to one of the heroes of 1956, who had organised workers' councils then. He said that he doesn't want workers' councils now — he wants real political parties, and he wouldn't want any workers' organisation to be given special powers to influence the political process. This, I think, is very impressive: here you have a factory foreman with almost no education who has an atmosphere of respectability and a constitutional theory. The whole debate is conducted now in juridical language. People aren't arguing about policies, they're talking about the protection of rights, about the construction of a democratic constitution.'

One member of the new Politburo, Imre Pozsgy, has hinted that he might be interested in accepting another election. Mr. Grosz has looked on in a spirit of surprising tolerance as the debate has grown louder and more public during the last three months: no doubt it has been in his interests to allow an atmosphere of respectability to be won that fight, his instincts may tell him that it is time to put the genie back into the bottle. But it will be more difficult than ever before. The fall of Kadar has encouraged everyone to believe that there can be no return to the old system. The new system, at last, are losing their power.

THE SPECTATOR 28 May 1988

When Poles see orange it makes light of their lot

TODAY sees the anniversary "happening" organised by Poland's Orange Alternative movement in this superficially dour, once-German city. Two thousand people identically dressed as Little Red Riding Hood will fan out through the streets in celebration of Dwarves' Day. "You can also expect some of our charming undercover security police," announce the leaflets which have been distributed all over the grimy city, known as the home of Polar brand fridges and, more interestingly, for its unusually high proportion of young people, seats of learning, and its cultural vitality — the pantomime theatre and the Jerzy Grotowski Laboratory Theatre have an international reputation. The (official) cultural magazine, *Odra*, is accounted the best in the country.

If precedent is anything to go by, the Red Riding Hoods, watched by enthusiastic crowds of all ages, will — as the police progressively lose patience — help to sort each other to the *Milicja* and plainclothes cars to have their identities checked, and quite likely raise three cheers for cops of all kinds and hand them sweets. Banners will address questions of topical concern. "RIP Lavatory Paper in Poland" was one recent example, accompanied by a short quiz: "Are the queues for toilet paper an expression of a) a call for culture? b) the call of nature? c) the leading role of the Party in a society of developed socialism? Tick the right answer."

With the supposedly non-political Orange Alternative — the colour orange chosen for having no political meaning — has been reborn, to more purpose, the pretentious 1960s and 1970s Western vogue for quasi-spontaneous street theatrics. Its centre in Wrocław, suggested the zany humour has begun to spread all over the country. The regular "happenings" are clearly tiresome to the authorities, provoking embarrassed Jesuitical arguments in the official newspapers (and some snuffy comments from more stick-in-the-mud Solidarity activists) about why it is both

infantile and indeed "pathological" to garland policemen with flowers and call for a strict eight-hour working day for the security service. The police have made themselves quite absurd by arresting innocent people wearing red gloves, after the Orange Alternative called on everyone to wear something red to celebrate the October Revolution last year. The November referendum on reform was also awkward. "Wrocław — The city of 100 (200) per cent turnout (two times yes)" was a suitable slogan, suggested the Orange Alternative, ridiculing both the current exercise and the notorious 1948 referendum which purported to legitimise Communist rule.

But, as Waldemar "Major" Fydrych, 34, the elusive, much-imprisoned leader of the Orange Alternative, told me in an interview at the weekend, the infectious fun of the happenings often spreads to the police, too. Chucking out after the celebrations of the October Revolution, complete with a huge model of the Bolshevik cruiser Aurora and a cardboard cut-out of the battleship Potemkin, ended in good humour all round. The main purpose of the Alternative was to help people to smile, the movement's spokesman, psychology student Krzysztof Albin, suggested. It was a means of bringing people together, "which doesn't happen so often," and it was a means of making people look again at everyday reality. Wrocław (till 1945 Breslau) was denuded of its original German population by Stalin's post-war carve-up of eastern Europe, and the shift westwards of the Soviet Union's national boundaries. Part of Germany in turn became Polish, and Poles displaced from Lvov (now Lviv and part of the Ukraine) and Vilnius, now in Lithuania, flooded in to Wrocław replace them. Lvov, especially, had been one of the

liveliest cultural centres in central Europe, and that spirit has carried over even as nostalgia for a lost city fades. "Wrocław is a city both bereft of tradition and humming with it," said the Major, a graduate of history and history of art, highly-organised and intelligent. He is looking forward to expanding into other art forms, including music, and is writing a book about his work. Recently he explained to an underground newspaper how he came by his nickname, "Getting out of military service, I made my appearance at the psychiatric clinic. I explained to the doctor that I was raising the level of psychiatry in Poland. One day I was telling him that I had lovely officer's boots, and another that I was a VIP, that various forces surrounded me and craved my downfall. And one day when I came shaven to the skin and in sunglasses, he started shouting at me, that I ought to take them off and also that he was my superior. So I started to call him colonel, and I spoke of myself as 'major' and it stuck..."

THE INDEPENDENT Tuesday 31 May 1988

Towards a civil society: hopes for Polish democracy

The frequently imprisoned Polish historian and political writer Adam Michnik, an adviser to Solidarity, discusses with Erica Blair current developments in Poland and the Soviet Union.

In a recent essay you describe Gorbachev as "the great Counter-Reformer", who is effecting changes which are as unavoidable as they are risky. What exactly do you mean? What is Gorbachev trying to achieve in the Soviet Union? All the changes taking place from above in the Soviet Union are designed to maintain or modernize its empire. Gorbachev is not a man fighting for freedom. He instead wishes to make the Soviet Union more powerful. He is responding to three developments. First, the economic forces of Soviet communism have collapsed. The Soviet economy resembles a large old house built on marshland. Each day it sinks a millimetre or two deeper into the mire. The house still remains upright. It does not experience revolutions or catastrophes. Everything appears to go well. But after twenty-five years of subsidence, the whole ground floor of the house has been destroyed. This is Gorbachev's peculiar problem. He isn't facing a workers' revolution or nationalist resistance. He is confronted by a new type of revolt – a revolt of inanimate things – which cannot be quelled by the usual methods. When people can be sent in against them, the police or army can be sent in against them. But a subsiding house is unafraid of the police or army. It doesn't acknowledge the leading role of the Communist Party. And it cannot be explained by any Marxist-Leninist formula. Gorbachev is thus searching for a method of crushing the anonymous revolt of the economy – of propping it up as it slowly disappears into a quagmire.

Gorbachev is also faced with a cluster of international problems. The Soviet Union has two great world competitors, the United States and China. After the breakdown of détente, the United States assumed the position of leading superpower. The Reagan administration declared the Soviet Union to be the evil empire, and in so doing confronted the present leadership with fundamental problems. President Reagan is undoubtedly one of the fathers of the Gorbachev reforms. He forced the Soviets to abandon their strategy of détente based on bilateral relations and attack on the West on its periphery. The Kremlin was faced with the real risk of open confrontation with the whole Western world. Gorbachev's foreign policy seeks to address this risk of a new arms race by reversing the dangerous geopolitical

trends confronting the Soviet Union in the global arena. This strategy has been reinforced by the extensive political and economic reforms in China in recent years. These reforms have been doubly effective: they have produced considerable material benefits, as well as altered the geopolitical position of China. Particularly important are the improved relations between China and the United States, which have forced the present Soviet leadership to recognize the possibility of its isolation at the international level.

Poland is a third consideration for Gorbachev. The Polish events have taught the Soviet leadership certain lessons about what will happen in the Soviet Union unless they pursue their own internal reforms. If Solidarity is viewed as a reform movement capable of destroying the totalitarian system, then Gorbachev is a counter-reformer. He wants to defeat the system by reforming it. The imposition of martial law in Poland on December 13, 1981, was something quite different. It was a counter-revolution. It supposed that the Polish crisis is caused by a complex of specifically Polish mistakes, and that their correction is possible by enforcing the peace and quiet of the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia, where there is no crisis. Every action of Jaruzelski's team after December 13 aimed to create similar conditions of peace and quiet in Poland. But Gorbachev has responded: "No! There is no specifically Polish crisis. This is the crisis of the whole Communist system." In this sense, Gorbachev has shattered the ideology of the Jaruzelski group, which is now under pressure from the reforms emanating from Moscow. The Gorbachev counter-reformation has had a restraining influence on the Jaruzelski counter-revolution. Jaruzelski has been forced to return to the rhetoric of reform. He cannot pursue policies based on repression, because they would be contrary to Gorbachev's policies.

In western Europe and North America there is considerable discussion about the links between this "peace offensive" of Jaruzelski and the desperate need for economic reform in Poland. Many believe that Gorbachev has privately urged Jaruzelski to move in the direction of economic reforms, thereby forcing him to cultivate the social support crucial for their successful implementation. Hence the talk of democracy, national reconciliation, the amnesty of September 1986, a second phase of economic reform, and the November 1987 referendum. Would you accept this Western interpretation of current Polish events? Has Jaruzelski embarked upon a "peace offensive" and serious economic reforms?

Talk of Jaruzelski's peace initiative is a joke –

as misplaced as if it had come from General Pinochet or the South African President. General Jaruzelski could make a genuine peace initiative by seeking a peaceful rapprochement with his own nation. But so far he hasn't done so. No doubt he needs social support, not only to facilitate economic reforms but also just to be able to run the country. Every dictator from Pinochet to Castro requires social support. However, the crucial problem of Jaruzelski is that his efforts during the past six years to remedy the Polish economic crisis have collapsed. And today his grandly announced "second stage" of economic reforms, translated into ordinary language, means nothing more than a violent attack on the standard of living of ordinary Polish people. Jaruzelski knows that he is standing on a live volcano. All his declarations and reform initiatives therefore have a double meaning: to deceive his own nation and to lie to the Western world in order to win credits.

What are your reasons for thinking that these pseudo-reforms are unworkable and unlikely to lead to a "liberalization" of the Polish system, as many Western observers hope?

The ingenious scheme of Jaruzelski is to build communism in Poland on the American dollar. His "liberal" gestures are all geared to this objective. It is important to understand what "liberalism" actually means in this context. Communism is a system based on a specific form of apartheid. Under the apartheid system in South Africa, a whole category of citizens is discriminated against because of the colour of their skin. Within communist systems, a whole category of citizens is similarly discriminated against because of their political views, religion or party affiliation. The important question for me is whether or not General Jaruzelski intends to abolish our apartheid system by fostering equality among our citizens. This would require the destruction of the power of the *nomenklatura*, which is comparable to the white population in South Africa. So far, Jaruzelski shows no signs of wanting to abolish our form of apartheid. Everything he does preserves the power of the *nomenklatura*. In so doing, he undermines any possibility of economic reforms. For the unchecked power of this ruling *nomenklatura* is the source of the present irrationality and crisis of the communist economy. Our whole economy is subject to stiff and arbitrary planning measures introduced and guided by this small ruling group, which is not subject to legal constraints, market forces or democratic procedures.

The Polish "neo-liberals", followers of Milton Friedman, make a similar complaint. They argue for the introduction of market mechan-

isms into the command economy as a means of improving its productivity, output and distributional effectiveness. Why are you critical of their views?

The proposals of the neo-liberals are unrealistic. They dream of transforming General Jaruzelski into a General Pinochet. They want him to retain dictatorial political powers and to guarantee full economic freedoms. This is impossible. The *nomenklatura* will not relinquish their grip on the economy because this is their source of power. Besides, the economic achievements of General Pinochet are unimpressive. In Chile a free market coexists with poverty and a permanent economic crisis.

What if some strange turn of events confronted Poland with the possibility of replacing General Jaruzelski with a General Pinochet?

If forced to choose between General Jaruzelski and General Pinochet, I would choose Marten Dietrich. The alternative is absurd and irrational. It offers me the choice, as I fight for democracy in a dictatorial system, of sitting in prison either as a communist or as an anti-communist. In Chile I would be imprisoned as a communist, whereas in Poland I have already served six years as an anti-communist. I am not interested in this kind of "pluralism". The point is that economic reform in Poland is impossible without basic political reform. Political reform is impossible without a long-term – if gradual – programme of abolishing our apartheid system. The precondition of such reforms is the recognition of Solidarity as a partner in the dialogue about the future of Poland. Without this, all Jaruzelski's talk of reform through dialogue will remain nonsense.

To what extent must economic and political reforms also address the deteriorating ecological situation in Poland? The situation appears desperate. Poland's waters are mostly undrinkable, cities such as Łódź and Warsaw do not have a single water-purification plant – one of the many reasons for the generally poor health of the population. Everywhere one travels, the air smells toxic. About 10 per cent of Poland's territory, inhabited by one-third of the population, has been officially designated as "ecologically endangered terrain". Is this picture accurate?

I am no expert on ecology. But I am convinced that these problems are linked with the conflicting interests of social groups. The problem faced by Polish society is that from the official point of view a civil society doesn't exist. Society is not recognized as capable of organizing itself to defend its particular interests and points of view. So the key to solving our ecological

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Keeping books tax-free

Isabel Fonseca

There is possibly no subject more likely to send readers to sleep than the question ("controversy" sounds too exciting) of whether or not the United Kingdom should tax books. And yet the building of a truly communal Europe – which is exciting – may depend on it and measures like it. By 1992, all movement of people, goods and services within the European Community will be free and open. Or so the twelve member governments promise in their determination to become a viable force of competition against the powerful economies of the United States and Japan. The harmonizing of taxes is a fundamental element of this effort.

Last summer, the European Commission announced its plan for a Community-wide tax on books and publications – including magazines with small circulations – at a "reduced" rate of between 4 and 9 per cent, with each member State determining its own rate within this band.

Some vigorously pro-Community voices believe that such a loose application of the measure is self-defeating. This was the position of a recent editorial in the *Independent*, which argued that the notion of a "genuine common market of 320 million consumers . . . will re-

main a mockery so long as the taxes charged on services and products within the Community range from zero to 38 per cent, with wide differences on the same items in different countries."

On the other hand, the European Committee Against Taxing Books, a Community-wide organization headed by Umberto Eco, unites commercial concerns (publishers and booksellers) and non-profit interests (libraries and universities) in opposition to the tax. They claim that "a harmonised VAT system for books and publications is not essential to establishing the full 'Common Market'. Books are naturally written in different languages and sold principally in national markets." They might have added that the creation of a genuine European community, which cannot be achieved by harmonious policies alone, would be better served by encouraging the publication of works in translation, for which the tax provides a distinct disincentive. The Committee recommends that the rate be kept on the lower end of the scale, and ideally at zero, which they sometimes reckon is not equivalent to exemption from the tax. (While this solution would minimize the generally deleterious effects of the tax, it would at the same time render the whole initiative pointless: the extra revenue from the proposed tax would be minuscule.)

All EC countries impose VAT on books except Ireland, Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom, but unless these countries can persuade the Community as a whole to adopt their view of books as "essential goods", along with food, fuel, and children's clothes, they too will be obliged to comply with the Commission's directive. The most convincing case for the tax would seem to be made by these EC members which are least interested in abolishing, or even reducing it: France (which is more concerned with the increase in taxes on tobacco and alcohol imposed on her by Community membership) and Germany. The appetite for reading does not appear to have been curbed by taxation in those countries. But obviously institutions with limited budgets, like libraries and universities, not to speak of the general reader, would suffer from the proposed tax. France and Germany notwithstanding, the European Committee argues that even the tiniest tax would effect a drop in demand. The resulting shorter print runs would increase publishers' unit costs of production, forcing them to raise cover prices and to publish fewer titles; that is to say, to offer less diversity at greater cost to the book-buying public.

A detailed economic analysis of the cost structure of publishing in Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States, carried out by

the National Book Committee in 1984 – when the United Kingdom first faced the prospect of a tax on books – demonstrated that the introduction of the then-proposed 15 per cent rate would have raised cover prices by around 20 per cent, cut demand by a similar amount, hit educational institutions even though they could reclaim the tax, and would have reduced the diversity of titles published. The report concluded that:

Given that some £14 billion of public money is spent on formal education annually in the UK, it appears quite inappropriate to seek to raise at most £85 million by removing the most significant measure which exists [zero rating] to support and encourage self-education and the purchase of books by pupils, students, researchers and the general reader.

While libraries and universities could arguably be further subsidized by central government (a solution unlikely to tempt Mrs Thatcher, and in any case one which would further neutralize the revenue benefits), there is no easy remedy for the threat posed to small or specialized bookshops, publications and presses. Before a tax on books becomes compulsory, readers are urged by the European Committee Against Taxing Books to write to their MPs, MEPs, the Commission, local and national newspapers – or the Committee itself at 19 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HU.

Towards a civil society: hopes for Polish democracy

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gical problems is the same as that for solving our economic problems. We need institutions capable of defending the environment. Certainly, ecological concerns may conflict with economic issues. What is beneficial for the economy may be ecologically harmful; more automobiles for society, for example, would result in further environmental degradation. Our world is full of contradictory values, and I cannot imagine a social order in which all of them were equally and harmoniously realized. But conflicts are genuine only when they are genuinely expressed. This is what our society is fighting for: to name things by their proper names, to articulate conflicts as conflicts.

I am curious to know how Polish society is reacting to the present situation. Compared with Czechoslovakia and Hungary – countries with which I am more familiar – the level of publicly expressed confidence and dignity among Polish people seems much higher. Is my impression correct? Or since the events of 1980-81 has this social confidence been slowly whittled away? Is Polish society in danger of feeling defeated?

The changes you observe are absolutely irreversible. The 1980-81 events were a revolution for dignity, a celebration of the rights of the vertebrate, a permanent victory for the straightened spine. Whatever happens, one fact cannot be erased from the twentieth-century history of this nation: that the downfall of the totalitarian communist order began here in Poland. I am convinced that while the events of 1917 signalled the rise of the communist system, the meeting at the Gdansk shipyards in August 1980 began its destruction. Six years after the Hungarian Revolution there was no trace of the revolution. And six years after the invasion of Czechoslovakia there was no trace of the Prague Spring. But six years after the declaration of martial law in this country Solidarity exists along with a civil society. There is an underground press, an underground culture, underground science as well as other underground structures. The people are relaxed, unafraid, and their backs are straight. We have educated our communists, and this is the greatest achievement of Solidarity. But this is now history, and we need to talk about the future.

In the West it is frequently remarked that Solidarity is no longer a serious threat to Jaruzelski. The disappearance of large demonstrations from the streets is cited as supporting evidence for this view. Is Solidarity being forced on to the defensive?

If we consider Solidarity as a movement of 10 million people, as it was in the days before martial law, then of course at present it is weaker. Movements involving millions of people are normally active only in important revolutionary moments. Solidarity is no exception, and in this sense it has come to resemble Western social movements. But I cannot treat seriously remarks that Solidarity has ceased to be a problem for General Jaruzelski. If this were the case, why doesn't he permit Solidarity to operate normally?

But are there fewer demonstrations in the streets? Why is the struggle of Solidarity against the State much less visible?

One reason is that society is tired of demonstrations and struggles which lead only to an escalation of confrontation with the government, and thus reduce the chances of concessions from it. Poles cannot win a war against the Soviet Union with stones and their bare hands. There is another reason. The worst actions today would be those which blocked changes in the Soviet Union. There is a nineteenth-century precedent for this in Poland, where in 1863 the January Uprising blocked the reforms of Alexander II in Russia, thus allowing the soul of Russia to pass from Aleksandr Herzen to the arch-priest and prophet of nationalism, Mikhail Katkov. In 1956, the Khrushchev reforms were also blocked by the Hungarian Revolution. Current developments in the Soviet Union offer a real possibility of changes for the better throughout the communist block. Since we have helped stimulate these changes, and since their deepening is impossible without Solidarity, we do not want to frustrate them. We therefore work through

our underground press, plays and films, and not through violence on the streets. Solidarity has two methods of fighting the totalitarian State. It can rely on strikes and demonstrations, and it can turn its back on this State by confronting it, as Maciej Poleski says, with the silence of the sea. A society which remains silent seems easy to control. In fact, it is very difficult to rule, precisely because it is insensitive to the impulses of the State. Lech Wałęsa likes to ask the question: "What is the difference between fish in an aquarium and fish soup?" His answer: "The fish in the aquarium can be converted into fish soup, whereas the fish soup cannot be converted back into aquarium fish." This subtle joke summarizes Jaruzelski's problem today. As long as he refuses to recognize Solidarity, he must suppose that society resembles fish soup. But if he wants society to resemble an aquarium of live fish, as he must do if his reforms are to be successful, then he must recognize that it is Solidarity that gives real life to our society. Without Solidarity, Jaruzelski's hands are tied, even though Solidarity is unable to call a general strike at a day's notice. This is the secret of the Polish situation. For six years Jaruzelski has been paralysed by his insistence that Solidarity does not exist. His actions against Solidarity resemble the attempt of Xerxes to defeat the sea by doing battle with it. Jaruzelski is faced with a painful choice: either he is realistic and acknowledges the crucial importance of Solidarity in a society independent of the State, or he believes – as Marxist-Leninists sometimes do – in the miracle of Solidarity's disappearance.

Since the imposition of martial law, there has been a debate among Western politicians about how best to react to the Polish regime. How do you assess these official Western reactions to Poland, especially from the United States government?

American policies towards Poland and Eastern Europe in general have been unclear during the Gorbachev era. During the first years of martial law, I was strongly in favour of the Reagan Administration's tough policies towards the Polish regime. More recently, I was most impressed with the remarks of Vice-President Bush on Polish television. Bush reported that he had met Wałęsa and other Solidarity leaders (I also had the honour of being among them), and that he thought it inappropriate to advise Polish society on what it should do. But he expressed the view that in other countries the source of a rising standard of living is respect for human rights and pluralism. And Bush stated quite explicitly that the partner of the United States is not the Polish State, but the independent Polish society. Of course, these sentiments constitute only the barest outlines of a coherent policy. But the fact that this meeting took place and these remarks were made is extremely important. Vice-President Bush achieved something which is to a large extent the result of Mrs Thatcher's earlier remarks to the Soviet people on Moscow television. Ten years ago, all this would have been unthinkable. President Carter's letter to Sakharov resulted in great tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. Nowadays, it is impossible for the Vice-President of the United States to visit Moscow without meeting Sakharov. This is a new and important precedent. The principle of Soviet policy used to be that States can only discuss weapons, armies and military problems. Now even the Soviet Union has to discuss human rights. For me it is shameful that what Margaret Thatcher was brave enough to do is not done by the British Labour Party or the Trades Union Congress. The problem of human rights and independent trade unions should be central to their policies as well. It is not merely a problem for conservatives. Western citizens and States must not turn their backs on us. It would destroy the possibility of democracy not just in Poland, but throughout Eastern Europe.

Poland is a peculiar country, the writer Antoni Smolinski once remarked. The Polish system today contains many peculiar features – a powerful and respected Church, agriculture under private ownership, extensive cultural freedoms – once considered impossible in a communist system. Despite this, you continue to speak of the Polish regime as totalitarian.

What precisely do you mean by totalitarianism in this context?

I was last in the West eleven years ago, during the last phase of the Franco dictatorship in Spain. Trade unions and political parties were operating semi-legally, there were wide cultural freedoms, an independent Church, independent agriculture, even a market. Even so, nobody called this fascism with a human face. Everybody claimed that this was fascism in a state of disintegration. What we experience in Poland today is not socialism with a human face, but totalitarianism with broken teeth. Ours is a disintegrating totalitarian system, whose "liberalism" is symptomatic of its weakness. The classical analysis of the totalitarian order presented by Hannah Arendt no longer describes our situation accurately; it applies only to State institutions themselves. The Polish system consists of a totalitarian State coexisting with a society which cannot be controlled through totalitarian methods. The State wants to exercise totalitarian power, but is unable to do so. It is forced to compromise with life, and this results in a provisional equilibrium between society and the State. Since the death of Stalin, the totalitarian doctrine has not changed. The State still wants collectivization and, since religion is the people's opium, it still wants to abolish the Church. But the State doesn't know how to achieve such goals. It nevertheless emphasizes one fundamental rule of totalitarianism: the leading role of the Party.

There is a potential confusion here. In the West, the term totalitarianism is still normally used to describe a type of brutal and delirious regime which requires the population's fanatical devotion – a regime such as Hitler's or Stalin's. Your remarks suggest that this sense of the term totalitarianism is inapplicable to the present Polish regime, precisely because its power is less delirious and more calculated and subtle – if often ineffective. Would you therefore say that this regime is totalitarian in the revised sense that it is mobilized constantly to prevent the formation of a civil society independent of the Party-dominated political order?

Undoubtedly. This State simply requires everybody – Catholic and non-Catholic, Party members and non-Party members alike – to praise the glory of General Jaruzelski and his group, and to attribute their failures to hard luck.

The idea of a civil society figures prominently in your criticisms of this new form of totalitarianism. In Letters from Prison you say that the birth of Solidarity was synonymous with the restoration, for the first time in the history of communist rule, of a civil society capable of reaching a compromise with the State. What do you mean when you speak of a civil society? How can this old-fashioned eighteenth-century term be of relevance today?

Václav Havel, one of the fathers of the recent renaissance of the term, and one of the most penetrating writers in Europe, has shown that totalitarianism is essentially paternalistic. In the totalitarian order, the State is the teacher and civil society is the pupil in the classroom, which is sometimes converted into a prison or a military camp. In a civil society, by contrast, people do not want to be pupils, soldiers or slaves; they act as citizens. The idea of a civil society was born at the end of the eighteenth century as a reaction against the feudal system. The communist system is a late twentieth-century, more barbaric form of feudalism. It is therefore not surprising that the anti-totalitarian opposition draws on the classical forms of struggle for a democratic order. The point is that, as citizens, we in the democratic opposition don't want to be treated any longer as children or slaves. The basic principle of the anti-feudal movement was human rights, the idea that everyone has rights equal to those of the monarch. That's what we also want. We want everybody to enjoy the same rights as Jaruzelski, secured by the rule of law.

Your activities display a deep commitment to democracy – a term which is many-sided and much-abused these days. Exactly what do you mean by democracy? Is there anything specifically Polish about your understanding of the term?

I am a child of a specifically Polish democratic

tradition. Four of its most important contemporary representatives – the writer, Czesław Miłosz, the poet Zbigniew Herbert, the philosopher Leszek Kołakowski and a priest from Kraków, Fr Karol Wojtyła – have greatly influenced my understanding of democracy. Among these figures there are no politicians or political activists, and that is probably why I think democracy is not based on exclusively political principles. For me, democracy concerns the human condition and human rights. It entails a vision of tolerance, an understanding of the importance of cultural traditions, and the realization that cherished human values can conflict with each other. Political democracy, by contrast, is an order based on majority rule. It can and often does conflict with human rights, which can be realized only within an order guaranteeing the point of view of all citizens, including that of minorities. The essence of democracy as I understand it is freedom – the freedom which belongs to citizens endowed with a conscience. So understood, freedom implies pluralism, which is essential because conflict is a constant factor within a democratic social order. But, as Kołakowski has pointed out, freedom gives us power over ourselves. It thereby enables us to do good or evil, as we choose. Although this freedom is God-given, it enables us to relinquish truth and good. We have the freedom to reject two thousand years of Christian civilization. But we also have the freedom to ask ourselves why we should do so, and which other values allow us to reject it. And so if I hear I should reject something which is part of my cultural tradition, I must ask: what is to replace what I am rejecting? Cardinal Wojtyła taught me to ask this question. The principle of freedom also raises questions – posed clearly for me by Czesław Miłosz – about the need for tolerance. Should the strength of my culture rest upon pluralism or upon uniformity (*Gleichschaltung*)? Should Poland be a country for Catholics only? Should it become a military dump? Or should Poland instead comprise a wealth of cultures? Should it not be a place for all the people who live within its borders – a country for not only Polish Catholics, but also Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Lithuanians, Jews, gypsies, Baptists and others? Finally, democratic freedom as I understand it requires citizens to ask themselves the question posed by Zbigniew Herbert: if the majority of people had succumbed to a victorious totalitarian system, like that of Hitler or Stalin, should I go along with them? Or in the name of democracy should I choose instead to go it alone and to be defeated by embracing my belief in freedom and tolerance, my cultural tradition, and my human dignity? I consider all these questions central to democracy.

Among the important consequences of this view of democracy is a disavowal of both violence and revolutionary politics. You have been a strong supporter of the Polish opposition's remarkable capacity to avoid the use of violence. "To believe in overthrowing the dictatorship of the Party by revolution," you write in Letters from Prison, "is both unrealistic and dangerous." Elsewhere you point out that those who use force to storm present-day Bastilles are likely to build bigger and worse Bastilles. Why in your view are calls for violent revolution so dangerous, and a major threat to democracy?

My reflections on violence and revolution were sparked by my puzzlement about the origins of totalitarianism. I searched for clues in the writings of George Orwell, Hannah Arendt, Osip Mandelstam and Albert Camus, and I came to the conclusion that the genesis of the totalitarian system is traceable to the use of revolutionary violence. My father was a communist. He believed that revolutionary violence would produce social justice. This earned him eight years in prison, at the time of the Moscow trials of the 1930s. He must have posed the question: "Do I want a repetition of the trials of Stalin's time?" I repeated this question to myself, and I answered that violence consumes and demoralizes the person who uses it. Castro wanted a free Cuba. But in the revolutionary struggle against Batista, he was corrupted by power. Whoever uses violence to gain power uses violence to maintain power. Whoever is taught to use violence cannot relinquish it. In our century, the struggle for freedom has been

fixed on power, instead of the creation of civil society. It has therefore always ended up in the concentration camp.

It is a commonplace observation that revolution is a transformative experience, an adventure of the heart and soul, as Ryszard Kapuscinski says. Citizens initially feel strengthened by it. Their inner feelings of emptiness momentarily disappear. Astonished, they discover boundless energies within themselves. They experience joy in their determination to act and to change the world. Participation in the revolution becomes a giddy exploration of the unknown. Your writings cross-examine such experiences and highlight their unintended outcomes, such as terror and vengeance. For you, revolution is certainly a giddy experience – which most often produces sobering outcomes. Revolution is the child of liberty, but the parent of despotism.

Exactly. This is a problem in every revolution. Just as the English revolutionaries yearned for freedom and produced Oliver Cromwell, the struggle of the French revolutionaries for the *droits de l'homme* led to the guillotine. In the twentieth century, the Russian, Chinese and Cuban revolutions are not exceptions to this rule. Nor is the Iranian Revolution, which is a conservative revolution against a modernizing dictatorship. The child of this revolution is Khomeini, who is worse than the Shah. I wouldn't like this sort of outcome in Poland. Violence fractures social bonds. And whenever society is atomized, its intra-social networks shattered, it becomes vulnerable to totalitarianism. Hypothetically speaking, if Jaruzelski were to be replaced tomorrow by Wałęsa or Kuron nothing would change. The crucial problem is therefore to build a democratic society which renders totalitarianism impossible by altering the social mechanisms of power along the lines attempted by Solidarity.

You mentioned that democracy is sometimes nurtured by cultural tradition. An obvious example is Polish Catholicism. The far-reaching effects of the Catholic Church on the political system – as well as its support for the Polish opposition – have often been underestimated in the West, especially on the Left, because of certain misgivings about Catholicism. The possibility that a Church might defend democratic liberties seems as implausible to some people as the sight of striking workers reciting *Hail Marys*. This scepticism is fuelled by the belief that the sexual theology of the Church is reactionary. In L'Eglise et la gauche you attempted to explain that Catholicism means something rather special under Polish conditions. What is it about Polish Catholicism that makes it a driving force – a motor of social resistance, a powerful institution which is independent of the State apparatus and enjoys deep respect in civil society?

People in the West who do not understand the specific nature of the Polish Church should consider honestly the history of Ireland. This would help them grasp the crucial protective role of the Catholic Church in a poor country at war with a powerful empire. The Church in Poland plays a similar role. It is the guardian of Polish national identity. During the most difficult years of totalitarian oppression, it defended human dignity and cultural identity, including freedom of worship. In the Stalin era, the Church was the only institution from which people did not hear lies. This is one reason why Poles remain faithful to it. Another reason is that the present totalitarian system insists that every person is State property. The Church's view is that the human being is a child of God, to whom God has granted natural liberty. This God-given dignity is so great that the individual can admire only God, and not the State. It follows from this that in Poland and other communist countries religion is the natural antidote to the totalitarian claims of the State authorities, especially given that the Church relies not upon power, but upon dialogue. Of course there are dangers associated with Polish Catholicism, and Catholic intellectuals here are aware of them. The Polish Church is tempted to renew the alliance between the altar and the throne. All the impulses coming from the Vatican are nevertheless opposed strongly to an alliance between Church and State. The Church of Pope John II rests upon a philosophical defence of human rights – not just of Catholics, but of everyone.

Nevertheless many people in the West, including some Catholics, complain about the lack of universalism of some teachings of the Church. They question the restrictive definition of "natural liberty" which it lays down. The prohibition upon divorce and the sexist rulings on contraception are cases in point.

Precisely because I am not a Catholic, I am surprised that people in the West are concerned much more with the sexual ethics of the Catholic Church than with the violation of human rights in Soviet-type systems. And I have observed that nobody is more concerned with the ethics of the Catholic Church than non-Catholics. Let us consider the Church's posi-



Adam Michnik in Gdańsk

tion on divorce. The Church says: "If you want to live in agreement with the Church then you should not divorce." It does not use the police or the army to impose its point of view. Besides, the Church expects much more from people than sexual ethics. It beckons people to love their enemies – a command much more difficult to live up to than the prohibition upon divorce. It reminds the world that truth is truth, and that good is good. It understands that we may not achieve the truth, but it emphasizes the necessity of acknowledging our failure to do so. The sexual theology of the Church is understandable in this respect. The world has no need of a Church which instantly proclaims everything people want. Nowadays the world needs a Church which speaks the truth, even if the truth is difficult and unpleasant. No doubt, the Church is a conservative institution. And of course if there were only conservative institutions of this type within a society – we are not faced with this threatening possibility in Poland – then the Church would function as either a cemetery or a prison. I would nevertheless be very afraid to live in a world without conservative institutions and values. A world devoid of tradition would be nonsensical and anarchic. The human world should be constructed from a permanent conflict between conservatism and contestation; if either is absent from a society, pluralism is destroyed. This is why I'd like to live in a country whose laws concerning sexual ethics were very liberal, but in which the Church's teachings were very strict.

In the essay on Gorbachev, you remark that the Moscow reforms could consolidate a new philosophy of political compromise – compromise understood as a method of regulating domestic conflicts within the socialist bloc, and of con-

structing new international agreements, for example between Poland and the Soviet Union. For many Western readers, your emphasis on the need for compromise is surprising – especially since it comes from someone with such sharp democratic impulses. The theme of compromise after all has its roots in the early modern conservative tradition. "All governments, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue, and every prudent act," said Burke, "is founded on compromise and barter." How do you reconcile your commitments to both democracy and compromise? Doesn't talk of compromise make sense only if both sides in a conflict take seriously the need for compromise? What evidence is there that the Polish State is capable of conciliation, or that it is prepared to compromise with an organization it has done its best to destroy? Aren't you saying, to speak plainly, that the Soviet-type system is here to stay in Poland, and that a free Poland is impossible?

My vision of compromise certainly adopts realism as a starting-point. The geopolitical reality is that we are not strong enough to drive the Red Army out of Poland. But my vision of compromise has another starting-point. It is based on my conviction that pluralist democracy necessitates compromises in the face of complex realities. The philosophy of compromise is a philosophy which recognizes quandaries. The philosophy of radicalism, revolution, demagoguery and violence, by contrast, takes an easier path although, as I've explained, it produces the guillotine, and not democracy. From its inception the Left failed to recognize this. It lacked an understanding of the conservative perspective.

In Europe the conventional distinction between Left and Right is actually founded on this disagreement with conservatives. Traditionally, the Right was recognizable by its cautiousness about the future and its deference to the past, whereas the Left, intent on overthrowing the past and building upon the present, usually looked towards the future with an unbridled optimism. Doesn't your emphasis on the need for democratic social change through compromise cut across this traditional distinction?

Yes. Revolutionaries always wanted to identify conservatism with Joseph de Maistre. They failed to take account of the quite different perspectives of Edmund Burke. There are in fact two conservative traditions emanating from the French Revolution. De Maistre was a counter-revolutionary. He was the White Guard who worked to erase all traces of the French Revolution and to restore the Bourbon dynasty. Burke was a counter-reformer. Following in the footsteps of Montesquieu, he recognized clearly the complex problems posed by the Revolution. He argued that the values of the Revolution should be assimilated by working for change by means of compromise. *Reflections on the Revolution in France* cleverly analyses the paradoxes of freedom and revolution. Unfortunately it is today banned in Poland. If I were proficient in English I would translate this book and present Gorbachev and others with a complimentary copy – to teach them the philosophy of compromise.

How would you apply this originally Burkean idea of reform through compromise to the current situation? What is the basis of your hopes for a new compromise in the Gorbachev era? In broad outlines what would this new compromise look like?

I regard Gorbachev's telephone call to Sakharov as a symbol of the possibility of a new compromise within the Soviet empire. Gorbachev is confronted by a fundamental choice. Either he acknowledges that there are irremovable conflicts within Soviet society and, accordingly, works to build a social order based on compromise – among Tatars, Lithuanians, Estonians, Latvians, Georgians and other minorities such as the intelligentsia – or he attempts to resolve all conflicts by using the police and the army. I urge him to rely upon methods of compromise. There is no other choice for the Soviet Union: either there will be compromise or Stalinism. To avoid the latter, Gorbachev must find agreement with the natural leaders of the national minorities. He must develop a programme which encourages them to remain within a Soviet commonwealth of nations.

What are the chances of reaching a new compromise within Poland? Is the Jaruzelski group at all capable of conciliation?

This question must be answered by Jaruzelski. He must decide whether he will enter into a dialogue with Solidarity or be pushed aside like Gomulka or Gierek. I can see no other alternative, though he may last another two or three years. The Polish nation can wait this long, but I'm not certain whether Jaruzelski has this much time. The authorities think that so long as they have a gun at our heads they can do as they please. This is untrue, as the example of Gierek shows. Jaruzelski must also make a decision: to be recognized by history as the man who introduced martial law or as the joint architect of a new compromise. All signs indicate that Jaruzelski's policies are premised upon the collapse of perestroika in the Soviet Union, that he is the prisoner of his own history, and that he is incapable of compromise – and that a new compromise in Poland therefore requires his removal from power. Yet Lech Wałęsa has said that someone must be held responsible in this country. This is why Solidarity's hand will always be outstretched to compromise. We are ready for compromise but we shall never agree to capitulation. We shall continue to call for solutions by compromise, but in a wholly uncompromising way. Perhaps we will have to take to the streets once more. But if that were necessary I would feel that an opportunity had been squandered. My duty as an intellectual is to tell the truth, even when the truth is unpalatable for both my friends and the authorities. The truth is that if we were again forced on to the streets, then there would be bloodshed. I want to do everything to avert this possibility. And I want to have the feeling that, having done everything to avoid bloodshed, only the stupidity of Jaruzelski made it possible.

More than two decades ago you were arrested for the first time for involvement in the writing and distribution of an Open Letter to the Party. This document, signed by Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, openly criticized the regime in the name of the emancipation of the working class. What do you think of this document today? What would you write if you were to draft another open letter to the Party?

Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski are today ashamed of that letter. They consider it an intellectual mistake. I have a better opinion of it. It is a highly interesting historical document, which signals the end of a certain mode of political thinking. Its starting-point was the thesis that the Russian Revolution was a leap from the kingdom of necessity into the kingdom of freedom. And it repeated the Trotskyist call for a revolution of workers against the deformed bureaucracy. Its authors rejected the Church but respected the scriptures. Many groups in the West still use this language of Bolshevik criticizing Bolshevik. In our part of the world, this language is now dead. It belongs to a closed chapter of history. It is as incapable of expressing our reality as the controversy between the Jacobins and Girondists. The debate about how to improve socialism has become irrelevant because nobody in Poland knows any longer what socialism means. Our discussions now concentrate instead upon how to achieve freedom. Seen in this way, the letter of Kuron and Modzelewski is important. It is a requiem for Marxist revisionism. The observation of Engels that revolutions usually achieve something quite different from what they intend certainly applies to this letter. This is the first document in Poland to reject completely the ruling system. It argued for a genuine workers' revolution, but in fact signalled the beginning of a genuine civil society.

So what kind of advice would you include in an open letter to the Party today?

There could only be one piece of advice. I would repeat some words in *From the History of Honour in Poland*. I wrote this book in prison, and I concluded it by quoting the Polish poet, Julian Tuwim, whose words are addressed to communists in all lands: "Kiss my arse!"

This interview was conducted in Gdańsk and translated with the assistance of the East European Reporter, London.

Poszgay — Hungary's man of the hour

Imre Poszgay has been catapulted into the top three in Hungary's ruling apparatus. He's also the ruling party's leading ideologue. MARY KALDOR spoke to him and explored the limits of political reform in Hungary

"WE HAVE gone farther than Czechoslovakia in 1968. What was destabilising in 1968 is a factor for stability in 1988," Imre Poszgay, Hungary's leading reformist — and now probably No.2 in the hierarchy — told the western media immediately after the weekend's tumultuous events. Poszgay, 52, has been openly pressing for reform since last year as leader of the People's Patriotic Front — a state-run umbrella organisation for a variety of intellectual and religious groups.

Poszgay is already being feted by the western press as a "radical" reformist of heretical views (see, for example, Monday's *Independent*). A Hungarian intellectual gave me a more sceptical view: "He is the man of the hour. Because he offers some possibilities to established intellectuals who don't want to lose their job, their car or their house in the country, but would like to be able to express some critical views, to be more honest intellectually."

Meeting him made me aware of the limits to the space the reform tendency in the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party offers the Hungarian people. Poszgay is the Party's thinker. He has thought through the implications of political reform, but his thinking remains firmly within the Bolshevik tradition. Radical possibly, heretical no; Poszgay is above all a pragmatic politician who is perhaps most accurately described as the best reformist that Hungary has.

I interviewed Poszgay before the dramatic conference which promoted him to the Party's ruling Politburo — at a time when he would naturally be cautious. I asked him first about the possibilities of political pluralism in Hungary. He replied that pluralism already existed. Hungary had become more equal socially over the past 40 years, with a growing middle class and a more complex division of labour. "These tendencies have resulted in a complicated system of interests; pluralism is present in the public consciousness, both in the articulation of these interests and on a level of ideology." But political reforms in 1985 to introduce "the principle of representation" had proved primitive and contradictory, he said. "The political institutions still work as though this pluralism did not exist."

Poszgay explained: "Political reform has to transcend this situation. The reason why political reform has always been a very delicate question is that people tend to think in terms



Imre Poszgay: Hungary's best reformist but, above all, a pragmatic politician

of a party system; they conceive of reform in terms of liberal democracy. But this approach has two disadvantages. It frightens those people who at present defend the existing political system. And it gives illusions to radical groups. There is one strategic point that you cannot overlook here in this society. Both the internal political situation and our international ties require that any process of change should be based on stability. The level of integration that society has achieved so far should be viewed as a basic precondition and not as something to be destroyed. . . . The political reform cannot have another starting point; otherwise it might unleash all sorts of uncontrollable processes.

The question, of course, arises: Is this starting-point obvious enough for the public and would it be accepted? It might be considered too little to satisfy their expectations. Are we in time or are we late? In this respect, this year will be crucial.

Self-organisation

Central to Poszgay's conception of stable reform is self-organisation. "We should open up the gates for people organising themselves. Let's make self-organisation and civil initiatives into a basic right for the Hungarian people." However, this self-organisation would take place within certain limits. "The only obstacle that is legitimate is the

Hungarian constitution. This specifically means that socialism and our international relationships [ie, the Warsaw Pact] should be accepted. This is the constitutional basis. But all the rest should be open to debate, including very basic questions of politics.

"This self-organisation and social mobility, in the way I have defined it, would act in the direction of stability. This might sound paradoxical. It would provide time to reform the institutions, especially their hierarchical and vertical character. This includes representative bodies, the relationship between the party and the state, and the relationship between the citizen and the state.

How would self-organisation work in practice? How would I, for example, start an ecological club? He explained that I would have to prepare a draft statute for the association which would have to be examined by a court of law. The court would register the club if there were sufficient members and the statutes did not clash with the two basic constitutional principles [ie, socialism and the Warsaw Pact]. "The court is not supposed to make political judgments."

Suppose then that my club is registered and wanted to organise a demonstration against the proposal for a hydro-electric plant on the Danube [an expensive project that will destroy much beautiful countryside]? What then? Well, that would be possible — provided that the demonstration kept to the issue and the club guaranteed that nobody would give speeches undermining socialism.

But what is socialism? Surely self-organisation must provide some control, some independent check on the activities of the state? Yet registration meant control over self-organisation. If one of the governing principles is "respect for socialism", is not this open to abuse, to very broad interpretation of the law?

"Yes," he said, "and I know that you have just posed the most difficult question. The reason why I am beating around the bush is that I would not want to put my vote on one particular definition of socialism. It is exactly these rigid definitions that have become bankrupt over the last few years. I regard socialism, on the basis of Marx, as a political movement which is characterised by always transcending the present situation."

I pressed him on what might be tolerated in his scheme and what not? What about a club to push for conscientious objection, in Hungary and in other socialist countries? That would be all right, although he added that Hungary was rather tolerant about conscientious objection, and already allowed alternative civil service for religious objectors.

Even so, many conscientious objectors are in prison in Hungary because they object to military service on political grounds. What about a club for international solidarity which may organise a

demonstration in support of dissidents in Czechoslovakia? No, that would contradict Hungary's international relationships and provide arguments for the opponents of reform.

What about Solidarity?

And what about Solidarity? Is that a good example of an independent trade union? He thought that Solidarity had held out a lot of promise. But it exercised enormous influence without having an internal control system, and so became extremist and "unfit for power". "That was the reason for its defeat." The necessary control could be exercised through registration and representation in parliament.

Poszgay has taken a strong stand in favour of independent publishing. He argued that the state should not manage or control the press and the Communist Party should restrict itself to controlling the party press. There would, he explained, be a press law which would allow magazines and books to be published as long as they conform to the constitution. Could *Beszélő*, the widely read *szamizdat* journal of the democratic opposition, be published? "I don't think they keep within the law. They transcend these consensus limits."

Then he corrected himself. "But you shouldn't take what I say for granted, I'm not sufficiently familiar with these publications. I haven't got enough information to say anything judgemental about *Beszélő*. I might be unjust."

Rumour has it that Poszgay, like many other officials, is in fact a regular reader of opposition journals.

I asked about his ideas for parliamentary representation. In 1985, a new election law allowed independent candidates. But in practice, independents like László Rajk, a leading figure in the democratic opposition, were prevented by all kinds of party manoeuvres, such as packing nomination meetings with the workers' militia.

Poszgay thinks that it is important that critical people should be allowed to stand for election. "It's dangerous to leave them outside. Provided, of course, that such critical people accept the minimum consensus — there should be no obstacle to being elected. . . ."

We have to make the principle of representation clearer. Certain forms of representation and certain positions should be guaranteed. We should strengthen the parliament in its capacity as a legislative body and in its capacity as a check or control on the state. It should be a forum for the development of policy and political culture. If there are open debates in parliament, this would benefit the public."

But is it possible to strengthen parliament without a multi-party system? "I would rely on these representatives of special interests. The Party should withdraw from these everyday interests. The Party members themselves are divided according to different interests. There is the heavy industry party, the agricultural party, the intellectual party."

Would not this lead to a certain poverty of debate? Political parties have many defects, but still it is surely important to talk about ideas and ideology?

Their arguments are political and not ideological. In principle, I see no obstacles to the creation of a multi-party system under socialism. Indeed, Marx

says that where there are no parties and no division of opinion, there can be no progress. I am concerned about political exigencies — the need to preserve stability and the integration of society achieved so far. Any objection to the leading role of the Party would be destabilising. That is why I think that one of the most crucial points is the renewal of the Party. We need a Party that is able to accept new ideas and to solve problems. It needs a built-in political mentality which does not resist unavoidable problems but tries to confront them.

Finally, I asked for his views on *perestroika* and *glasnost*? "In my view, both for socialism and for Hungary, *perestroika* and *glasnost* are positive developments. Not as a model, but as a method. *Perestroika* is a radical and comprehensive overall reform, which is methodologically different from what we did earlier. We had to start with particulars. *Glasnost* is of enormous significance theoretically, but also much more in a practical sense because it can line up the intellectuals behind the reform."

However, he said, Hungary was farther advanced than the Soviet Union with such reforms. "I emphasize again, *perestroika* is not a model. God save us from models again. It is interesting as a method that grabs society in its totality. That's what our reforms never achieved. They were introduced piecemeal. Our circumstances in Hungary are similar to a joke you might have heard. We decide to switch to traffic on the left.

But we have to do it gradually — first the bus drivers, then the taxi drivers, then everybody else. This is impossible. We, too, have to formulate a new approach for the whole system. *Perestroika* provides a good international background. The chaotic way that we proceeded here was influenced by the international situation [ie, Soviet pressure]. *Perestroika* gives us more autonomy, the opportunity to decide for ourselves."

Poszgay's ideas on political pluralism clearly put a lot of emphasis on control and stability. He wants "self-organisation" and parliamentary representation, but within the limits — the acceptance of socialism, of the Warsaw Pact and the leading role of the Party — that make it difficult to envisage real checks on state power. When pressed on this contradiction, he emphasised the tactical nature of his thinking.

"The moment you accomplish something, you open up new issues and questions . . . If I formulate my own limits in expressing my views, a much wider space is opened up than exists at present. Within this range, I have very definite views about things, but beyond that it should be left to life and time to decide.

"I am concerned about exigencies in politics. Hungarian political thinking is either very pragmatic in a limited way, or it is based on illusions. There is no communication between these two approaches. What we are really missing is action."

THE FIRE IN BUDAPEST 2

Hungary turned upside down

You have seen and heard about the official politics of Hungary. But grassroots political life is humming with what Hungarians guardedly call "the new social initiatives". For social, read political. MARK THOMPSON reports from Budapest on Hungarian politics from below

IF BUDAPEST is the showroom of Soviet-bloc socialism, then Váci Utca in the city centre is its plate-glass window. Today it is as busy as ever. Young Hungarians queue to get into the gleaming new McDonalds, being admitted in batches, as if to an exhibition. Around the corner other young people line up outside the Adidas sports shop.

But less conspicuously the city hums with grassroots politics. It's the week of the extraordinary conference of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, of course, and Hungary's "new social initiatives" (as Hungarians guardedly call them) mean to escape from the stultifying censorship under which they work and take full advantage of any publicity that's going.

More generally, however, they are springing up because the 30-year consensus in Hungarian society has come to an end. The conference buried this consensus by bringing Janos Kadar's rule to an end. In fact, it died a year and more ago. True to form, the Party is behind the times and behind Hungarian society.

In a small theatre in east Budapest, about 200 young Hungarians discuss the formal statutes for the new Young Democrats' Federation (FIDESZ). The speeches are a strange, likeable combination of dramatic gravity ("the authorities hang over FIDESZ like the sword of Damocles") and far-out political demands ("army platoons should be self-organising, with elected officers").

FIDESZ has created quite a stir since it was set up at the end of March. Its founders adopted a strictly legalistic, non-confrontational stance towards authority, but were quite open about their wider political aims. The bold founding document declares that FIDESZ's activities are intended to "pursue the construction of a new Hungary", and that it will "strive for intellectual and political influence among the youth, in the interest of the wider acceptance of the political values it represents." Already FIDESZ has drawn more than 1,000 members, largely among university students

in Budapest.

That morning, older, more soberly dressed men and women queue outside a battered dance-hall half a mile away. They are just as excited. They are about to form Hungary's first independent trade union since 1948. The Democratic Trade Union of Scientific Workers (TDDS) is born of long-standing frustration with the existing, official union, combined with a new sense of confidence that *something can be done*.

The meeting should have taken place in university buildings in the centre, but permission was cancelled at the last minute. The dance hall can only hold 200 people, so the meeting splits into two rooms, with a microphone link. This slows the meeting down, but no one seems to mind. Speakers say how glad they are to be setting up an organisation in which "members can represent their own interests without undemocratic restrictions."

"Scientific workers" includes everyone working in the natural and social sciences, and higher education and research institutes. So this is a high-powered political group which calls for the rehabilitation of the Lukacs School of philosophers (Agnes Heller and others), as well as for pension reform. Again the concern for democratic practice and for constitutionality is scrupulous throughout. Like FIDESZ, this new trade union takes a legalistic, non-confrontational stance.

The next day the theatre hosts a third "initiative", the Hungarian Democratic Forum. The building is packed. The audience cuts across the wide social (and age) range, with non-professional workers, pensioners, children. Speeches are relayed on monitors in the stone-flagged foyer. The day's theme is press freedom, and the tone is different from the previous day's gatherings: more rousing and charismatic, less political. In the chair is Zoltan Biro, purged from the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party for involvement with the Forum. He describes the Forum as not only a political but a *spiritual* movement. A succession of writers and intellectuals come to the microphones. Dönes Csegey, a poet, gets the warmest applause, for his tolling list of censored subjects: "Where Imre Nagy is buried: secret. Why Hungary took part in the '68 invasion of Czechoslovakia: secret. Why Hungary won't go to the support of Hungarian minorities abroad: secret . . ."

'People are very angry . . .'

Sandor Szilagy is a founder of *Beszélő*, Hungary's best-known *szamizdat* magazine, and now works in support of the Hungarian and Romanian refugees from Transylvania. He explains: "Basically the problem is that people feel they don't have a future. And they are very angry. In a non-democratic system the only legitimacy a government can have is based on standard of living, and this is falling fast. Two or three years ago, new leadership would have been enough — not now. People think they simply *don't have time* for changes to filter down through the system. They have nothing to lose; they want to participate."

The Party cannot make the deep political reforms which it knows are essential for motivating people to rescue Hungary's failing economy. The universal phrase these days is "multi-party system": reformists in and outside the Party claim that it is on the way, just be patient. More radical voices say that unless society mobilises itself and

insists on political pluralism, the reform won't come. Unlike its neighbour eastern states, Hungary does not even nominally recognise other parties; they were abolished after 1956, and subsumed into the hollow Patriotic People's Front, the mass organisation which the Politburo's leading reformist, Imre Poszgay, has fashioned into a power-base.

"It's not a question of the 'hard-liners' and 'reformists' that western observers talk about", I am told by a professor at the Karl Marx University. "It's a question of being in power. If you know that you are in power because you have a monopoly of power, do you risk losing the monopoly? The Party needs to encourage citizen's initiatives, and it is willing to go as far as it can while retaining control and keeping things reversible. But that point cannot be known in advance."

The growth — first slow, now rapid — of the informal citizens' groups — church-orientated, literary, or political — has answered the need for spaces to meet and talk freely. They occupy a grey zone between legality and repression. For more than 20 years, explicit political opposition in Hungary consisted of some 40 people in Budapest — the so-called "democratic opposition". Brilliant, cosmopolitan, multi-lingual, ex-Marxist, often Jewish, now approaching or in middle-age, these people — often known as the "urbanists" — group around the *szamizdat* journals *Beszélő*, *Hirondo*, *Demokrata* and others. Their books and articles are translated, and they enjoy tremendous international prestige. They support TDDS and are delighted by the appearance of FIDESZ.

To many in the populist Democratic Forum, the urbanists are out of touch with the Hungarian people. One Forum supporter — a university teacher — describes the democratic opposition as a "little clique which doesn't want *not* to be a clique". Another says that "most of the democratic opposition spends most of its time in New York on grants from the Soros Foundation".

FIDESZ exists outside the urbanist-populist dualism. Vasarhelyi again: "This is the most encouraging symptom, that young people are free from these prejudices, that young people are free from only prejudice. Their whole education was different, and they will be much clearer and bolder than us. Also they have not been infected by Marxism. We were all communists or anti-communists: Marx was in the centre of our whole thinking."

The writer and oppositionist, Miklos Haraszti, says: "I don't buy substantial *ideas* of democracy any more: democracy as *technique*, not *ideology*!" FIDESZ is very much concerned with "the technique of democracy", and uses existing rights and institutions to make space for itself. On 8 April, leading members were summoned to a police station, where they were told that FIDESZ is an illegal organisation. The students argued their case on constitutional grounds, but were told that charges would be preferred if they did not flatly accept their illegality. Under which paragraph in the civil code would we be charged? they asked; unless it is specified in writing, we shall assume that this is just a friendly chat.

Next day every newspaper carried a Hungarian Press Agency report that FIDESZ was illegal. One paper, *Magyar Hirlap*, added that it was unconstitutional and that "Western capitalist forces" were behind it. FIDESZ responded by doing an extraor-

dinary thing: they warned the Agency and *Magyar Hirlap* that unless they published a correction, legal action would be taken. There was no reply. At the hearing, on 19 May, the judge concluded, inevitably, that the action could not proceed. But FIDESZ was not called illegal, and there was no mention of the hearing next day in the papers. Thanks to western radio, however, the result was known immediately.

It's hard to exaggerate the significance of this affair. In showing that independent initiatives are not quite defenceless, it counteracts the social fear that feeds political apathy. This fear gets scant mention in the west, yet as Haraszti states (even overstates): "In Hungary, the first meaning of Kadar is not liberalism, as is his image in the western press. He is the brutal terrorist of the last 30 years, and as long as he was on the scene it meant, 'We are ready to shoot' — *that's* what Kadar meant. His was the liberalism of the man who killed hundreds with courtroom decisions, and hundreds more without."

A new cautious mood

So now there's a new cautious mood of confidence. Independent groups are trying to make a coalition through the Network for Free Initiatives. With more than 1,300 supporters since its 17 March launch, the Network describes itself as "legal but not official", and wants to develop solidarity between workers and intellectuals.

The western press is out in force at the Network's press conference, the day before the party conference. Yet, once they have asked for the Network's opinions on the leadership, these journalists have nothing to say. Ed Steen of the *Independent* mentions FIDESZ and the Network, only to call them "in effect political parties in waiting" (23 May). This is untrue; these movements can only be translated into familiar terms by distorting them.

As Miklos Vasarhelyi remarked afterwards: "Western journalists come only if there is an event like this party conference, but they don't really understand the life of this country. Don't forget, for all these difficulties, Hungary is the socialist country which has gone furthest with reforms. Civil society in this country is, in my opinion, at least as important as the intrigues and struggles of the leading politicians."

The western media see the new Party boss Grosz as an invigorating reformist, all set to pull Hungary back from the brink. No one yet knows what his policies will be, but the new activists believe that Hungary's problems cannot be solved by an change of leadership. Only the regeneration of society can make their country democratic. Civil society — society outside state and party institutions — needs strengthening. But it cannot be strengthened if it is atomised and unidentifiable. The new movements' first task is to give substance to people's aspirations to participate without fear in political life. They engage the state without confronting it: thus they can only be suppressed illegally or violently. In Czechoslovakia or Romania this would swiftly happen; in Hungary, it may not. So far, the authorities have responded with disinformation — and with competition! A few days after the TDDS meeting, a new *official* union for scientific workers was announced: TDS — without the D for "Democratic".

The Story of Passports

We proclaim the 13th of August as the International Day of Prisoner of Borders and we wish this day to become the symbol of our protest against injustice and repressions.

For many years the citizens of Poland have been deprived of one of the basic human rights—the freedom to travel freely, to leave the country and come back without insulting formalities. Possessing the passport is not a right resulting from the fact of Polish citizenship but a privilege. Authorities treat it in terms of reward and punishment.

Issuing a passport can take place only after completing long (about 7 weeks) and humiliating formalities. First one has to file a form including a lot of ridiculous and inquisitive questions about family, military service, party membership, relatives living abroad, the place of work, etc. Then permissions from the army and the place of employment have to be enclosed. Only those people who have an official invitation, which Polish embassies sell all over the world making thus a huge business, are allowed to apply.

Final decision belongs to the secret service.

Politically involved people are usually refused their passports. In this way the secret police have a powerful tool of controlling the society. People are afraid to act independently, to reveal their views openly because they fear they won't be granted their pass-

ports. Some are even afraid not to vote in the mock-elections, also because of passports. This situation is an additional factor causing emigration from Poland. Once allowed to leave the country nobody is sure when the next time will be. This humiliating procedure repeats every time one wants to travel. Staying a few days longer than permitted or going to another country is a crime punished by refusing passport by next application. So people rather do not come back than wish to be exposed to waiting, insulting, asking for invitations and then, maybe, refusal.

In this situation we initiated the *Club of Prisoner of the Borders*. The Club started during the Peace Festival in Bialogora on the 30th of July, 1988. We invite to our club all people all over the world, who meet obstacles in free travelling. In our club we are going to act according to non-violence.

The first action—collecting signatures under a petition demanding passports for everyone took place still during the Festival. The second one was on the 13th of August—the day of erecting the Berlin Wall. This is a product of a divided world, in which political situation divides friends and families. We proclaim the 13th of August as the International Day of Prisoner of Borders and we wish this day to become the symbol of our protest against injustice and repressions.

On that day two participants of Gdansk WiP—Wojtek Blazek and Klaudiusz Wesolek entered the passport department demanding passports for everyone. Wojtek was brutally kicked out of the office and after one hour Klaudiusz was arrested and sentenced for 50 hours of compulsory labour.

We want to put an end to the situation in which passport policy is another way of controlling the society. We propose joint actions demanding that all political prisoners in home arrest are to be immediately released.

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FOREIGN NEWS

Police stop march for democracy in Peking

PEKING — Hundreds of police sealed off the centre of Peking yesterday, blocking students from a planned protest march to demand more democracy and freedom of speech.

Peking University students, angered by the killing of a classmate last week and disappointed at the tempo of reforms, had planned an illegal march to Tiananmen Square — site of the Great Hall of the People and the Forbidden City. But police, standing thirty paces apart, cordoned off the approaches shortly before the protest was to begin. The Chinese flag fluttered over the empty square, normally filled with thousands of afternoon strollers, and dozens of police vehicles were parked nearby. Police kept pedestrians moving along the surrounding walkways.

By mid-afternoon several groups of students had gathered, joined by a larger number of curious onlookers. But they found themselves vastly outnumbered by plainclothes and uniformed police.

"I came today to demonstrate, but it seems to be too difficult," a student said. "There are too many cops around." About 20 students who sat on the sidewalk near the square and others who huddled in small groups debating government policies in hushed voices were dispersed by police. A foreign eyewitness said he saw one person led away by police. "They were just too strong for us," a student said.

Several people said they had seen police detain a teacher and

From William Kazer
of Reuters

one student said it appeared city buses had orders to deny rides to students for the day to discourage them from demonstrating. "It is very possible that I will be arrested," a student said. "But that is fine by me. Our cause is just."

Students said they had supported the reforms, begun by the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in 1978, which had gradually opened the political system and revitalised the economy. But many are angered by official corruption and disappointed that political reforms have not proceeded faster.

Authorities tried to head off the march after two nights of student rallies at Peking University where dozens of wallposters had appeared attacking government policies. Teachers at the university said that some classes had been cancelled.

A city government announcement, published in the *Peking Daily* yesterday, said that a "small number" of students were using the killing of a classmate by a gang last week for ulterior political motives. It also reminded students that such protests were illegal.

Overnight, posters appeared urging students not to take to the streets. But new posters were in turn tucked up on the campus. One of them read: "What does China need most now? It needs freedom, human rights and democracy."

CHINA'S ENTERPRISE- CULTURE REVOLUTION

WITH GUEST SPEAKERS DIRECT FROM
THE PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF CHINA

THE INDEPENDENT Thursday 9 June 1988



Abandoning a march to demand more democracy in China, Peking students sit in the street, outnumbered by police and onlookers.

Bucking the Odds in China, a Ph.D. Sets Out to 'Make Some Money'

25 JUNE 88 • NY TIMES

By Edward A. Gargan
New York Times Service

TIANJIN, China — Ouyang Jianfeng, baby-faced and bespectacled, roves the halls of Tianjin University a bit like an academic James Dean, flouting convention and mundane expectations. His vehicle is ambition, one still little seen here.

"There's no point in being a professor," he said. "I want to make some money."

Mr. Ouyang, 26, has just finished his Ph.D. in precision engineering, the youngest person to do so at Tianjin University. He said he had decided, against the advice of most of his professors, to form his own company to peddle high-technology research to industry, to embrace an entrepre-

neurial life. Many universities, already pressed for money, are seeing their funding decline still further and suddenly are failing to keep their best graduates on teaching faculties. At the same time, a growing number of advanced-degree holders who have shunned academia are going jobless in an economy that finds it difficult to place educated and talented people.

Most state industries and institutions, accustomed to receiving assigned allotments of graduating college students, are not inflexible to cope with free-lance job-seekers, especially those with higher degrees. Indeed, holders of master's and doctor's degrees looking for work commonly talk of not even getting to the point of an interview in their job searches.

tive generally means severing the umbilical cord of guaranteed housing, medical care and income.

But Mr. Ouyang said he is not worried. "I'm trying to find a new way to make full use of my talents," he said. "Scientific research is divorced from research in China. For example, in this university, there's a lot of advanced engineering, a lot of advanced scientific and technological projects. But after these projects are finished they're just put away. Nobody uses them."

"One of the problems is the traditional role of intellectuals in our society," he added. "They pay attention only to theory, not to application. We have to change this."

"Take my project, for example," Mr. Ouyang continued. "I've worked out a way to improve

In the ten short years in which China has been liberalizing its economy, it has also gone through a crash course in the triumphs and tragedies of capitalism.

AS CHINA OPENS HER DOORS
TO THE WORLD, THE SHANGHAI HILTON
INTERNATIONAL OPENS ITS DOORS TO YOU

To feel the pulse of China's economy one must travel to her commercial heart — Shanghai. Here in this bustling city, you will soon discover a standard of service and accommodation renowned throughout the world. The Shanghai Hilton International is now open.

All this leaves Beijing's planners with little room for maneuver in their battle to boost output, satisfy a domestic demand that is becoming increasingly hungry for consumer goods and at the same time make sure that the inflationary consequences do not seriously rock the social and political boat.

It's not the specter of an inflation rate spiraling off into serious social unrest that worries the government — by all accounts, it's left at all short the tumult and hardships of the Cultural Revolution the vast majority of Chinese have had enough of to go ahead. If inflation gets out of control it will strengthen, and to some extent vindicate, the hard-line position of conservatives in the political structure, whose view of the Chinese has been one of "let's see what happens" since the start of the reform.

The people have learned to think for themselves.

cautious style, its circulation dropped by half. In the Soviet Union, with a population of more than 280 million, Pravda circulates more than 10 million copies. Even allowing for lower literacy rates and less average buying power in China, there is no reason why a population of more than a billion should produce a newspaper readership smaller than Pravda's. I argued in a speech in China in 1984 that the cover-up of issues in Chinese political and social life drives the people from the Communist Party and increases their indifference. I said: "Our level of democracy will be determined by our degree of openness; because democracy, to a large extent, is the right to choose." My term "openness" was meant in quite the same sense as the *glasnost* advocated by Mr. Gorbachev in 1985. Yet China still has no *glasnost*.

— Derek Mallard

The Chinese Are Rooting For Glasnost

By Liu Binyan

LOS ANGELES — Probably no country outside Eastern Europe is more concerned than China about the success of Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms. Just as China's achievements in economic reform have inspired Soviet reformers, so the fate of Mr. Gorbachev's political reforms will have considerable influence in China, which trails far behind the Soviet Union in this respect.

Mr. Gorbachev, unlike the Chinese reformers, has always made political reform a priority. Changes in the Soviet press have been especially envied in China. No mainland Chinese newspaper has been allowed to match the way the Soviet media boldly expose political mistakes, stimulate discussion of political questions and explicitly challenge conservative views.

The Chinese are no less interested in social and political issues. From 1978 to 1980, when The People's Daily was unusually frank and courageous, its circulation rose to seven million. Later, as the paper reverted to a more

Russian reformers enjoy one distinct advantage over the Chinese in the pursuit of *glasnost*. Mr. Gorbachev represents a new generation of leaders who were not shaped by the Stalinist era. While reformers in both countries must contend with a strong authoritarian tradition, Stalin has been dead for 35 years. Mao Zedong died in 1971. Moreover, Stalin, unlike Mao, valued the utility of intellectuals. Today there are proportionately more intellectuals in the Soviet Union, with more jobs open to them, than in China.

A postwar history of economic development and internal peace makes it harder for Russian reformers to argue convincingly for *perestroika*. The Chinese reformers, who have no such legacy to argue against, have met less resistance in reforming the economy.

Another factor favoring China's reformers is the Cultural Revolution, which devastated both the culture and the economy. While Mao's influence still grips many in the political elite, the experience of the Cultural Revolution has cured many Chinese citizens of the superstitious belief in personal authority and freed them from political dogmatism. The Chinese people today cannot possibly be as blindly obedient and docile as they were. They have learned to think for themselves.

This energy, newly unleashed by free market measures, has made economic reforms in China a partial success. Tens of millions of Chinese have escaped economic relationships of dependency to take charge of their own lives and to pursue their own economic interests. Yet the success is limited by the old, immutable political system which has not kept pace with the demand for reform. The huge and ever-expanding bureaucracy continues to threaten individual interests.

Tens of millions of Chinese are still without adequate food and warmth, and severe inflation is causing nearly everyone's standard of living to fall. These facts stand in sharp contrast to the extravagant luxuries enjoyed by those who retain power and privilege. All these conditions contribute to a great popular yearning for change. Why economic reformers have had more success than their Soviet counterparts. Now they hope that Mr. Gorbachev is as successful in the political realm as they have been in the economic. That could give the push they need to bring political reform to China.

The writer, formerly a reporter at the *People's Daily* in Beijing, is a visiting lecturer at the University of California at Los Angeles. He contributed this comment to *The New York Times*.

This is a pre-text for a Free University of Glasgow 'round-table' discussion on progressive themes in Liberation Theology and in Scottish religious circles.

The extracts from Donnison, Miller, Skinnider and Kilbey below are from a seminar on the Scottish Relevance of the Report of The Archbishop's commission on Urban Priority Areas. It was held under the auspices of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues, New College, University of Edinburgh, on 1 March 1986

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REPORT

DAVID DONNISON
University of Glasgow

I have been asked to talk about the significance of the Commission's Report and I will do that by considering, first, its place in British politics, and then its practical implications for the lives and work of each of us. To move convincingly from the first broad and speculative phase of this discussion to the more immediate and practical topics which follow, I must pause midway to review some of the main messages of the Report. In conclusion I shall briefly reconnect the two planes of the argument.

The Contribution of the Report to British politics

Since the Government did not ask the Archbishop to set up a Commission, it is most unlikely to take notice of the recommendations in this Report. Governments like to launch their own reforming initiatives and garner for themselves whatever credit there is to be gained from them. Yet inquiries of this sort can, over the longer run, be influential.

Despite the parties' rhetoric about their intentions, when it comes to deciding what to do, British Governments seldom stray far from central, consensual, common ground. Our present Government's rejection of consensus politics is quite "unBritish". Fundamental changes in this country's political priorities are rare. Each of us would probably identify slightly different periods of turbulence and change, but the years 1832, 1905, 1918 and 1945 would probably figure in nearly everyone's list. During such phases the old order is discredited and political leaders must quickly find new and convincing ways of gaining credibility and asserting their claims to power. With no time for research or for controlled experiment, they grab whatever ideas seem to promise better ways of running the world. Within a few months new priorities are established which shape the general directions in which policy evolves for many years to come. Thus, for example, most of Beveridge's famous wartime report was legislated straight into the statute book by the Attlee government of 1945. At the same time a whole series of reports on the health services, reaching back through the interwar period, provided many of the ideas that Aneurin Bevan was building into the national health service.

The Archbishop's Commission on the inner city, like the Duke of Edinburgh's British Housing Inquiry which reported a few months earlier and the National Consumer Council's report on the social security system - "Of Benefit to All", published in August 1984 - will contribute to the stock of ideas which a future Government may turn to when the time comes for a new phase of reform. Together, they reassert a conviction that innovative spirits, working at the leading edge of the nation's social conscience, can hammer out some sort of agreement which the whole nation can accept about the kind of world we want to create.

We have heard today from the Commission's chairman about the recommendations which he and his colleagues made. Underlying them is a determination to rebuild what might be called fellowship, brotherhood and sisterhood, or the capacity of the community to take purposeful, humane, collective action. When their more detailed proposals have been forgotten, the Commission's conviction that by working together good people can make the world a better place may prove to be their most lasting gift to us all.

That leads straight to the central dilemma of the Report. Fellowship, like motherhood, can scarcely be rejected: what could be more lovable? But major changes in the priorities of Governments come about, not because someone has a bright idea or because an influential Commission commends them: they come about because they have to - and only when they have to. Earlier ways of going on must first be discredited; which means that the people with a stake in those ways must be discredited too, for they will defend familiar practices fiercely. Reformers never start with a clean slate. So how do we create fellowship through conflict - love through anger? This is the dilemma we must try to resolve.

Problems to be tackled

Before turning to the practical implications of the Report we must reflect on the perceptions it offers us of the city and its problems, and the general principles to be derived from that analysis. William Temple might have called them "middle axioms".

The problems which the Commission encountered in the inner city and - even more starkly - on the peripheral housing schemes start with hardship in many forms: unemployment and insecure, exploitative jobs; lack of money; bad housing; sickness and poor life expectations; poor education ... Let's call them "poverty" for short, for that is their most common denominator.

If we are talking not about individuals but about large groups of people who suffer far more than their share of these troubles, we shall find that they are selected not by their own defects, nor at random. They are the people whom governments can most easily ignore. That's not a conspiracy: it's just the way the world works. Other people who collectively have more influence cannot be ignored with impunity. Take a look at unemployment, for example, and note how it is most heavily concentrated among the youngest workers, the oldest workers, ethnic minorities, women, people living in rather inaccessible places - a range of groups who cannot readily be mobilised into politically effective resistance. Note how society weakens what little solidarity they have by getting as many of them as possible into jobs for a few weeks or months at a time, thereby preventing them from identifying too strongly with "the unemployed". Note, too, how it reinforces their weakness by constant, humiliating talk about "work incentives", "scroungers" and the like - suggesting that their plight is their own fault. Humiliation is a constant feature of poverty to which I shall return.

Poverty is related in all sorts of ways, both as cause and as effect, to exclusion from the rest of society. The unemployed are less likely than those in work to attend meetings, to have spouses in work, and to take part in most forms of recreation. They are also less likely to belong to trade unions or other associations. Ray Pahl has shown in his research on the Isle of Sheppey (R.E. Pahl, Divisions of Labour, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1984) what every close observer of the poor would confirm: that those who do best in black markets are people who also do pretty well in legitimate markets. The people excluded from the "formal" or legitimate economy tend also to play a less active part (both as customers and as suppliers) in the illicit "informal" economy, in the domestic economy, and in the economy of exchanges between neighbours. People can only help each other paint their front rooms and repair their cars if all concerned in the exchange can buy paint and motor spares.

People are more likely to baby-sit for each other if each of them can afford to have a night out. Sir Michael Edwardes' conviction that the unemployed are all living it up on the black economy is the opposite of the truth: the employed are far more likely to be doing this.

Those who try to bring excluded, poverty-stricken people back into society's mainstream meet obstacles of all kinds. Try giving such people some empty buildings in which to set up shops, a laundrette and some workshops in a neighbourhood starved of these things. The neighbours protest, the town planners say the street is zoned for other uses, and before new enterprises are capable of providing an income sufficient to support their struggling proprietors the social security office withdraws their benefits because they are no longer "available for work". Try encouraging people to set up a youth club for their wild youngsters in some otherwise unusable flats and offer to pay them as untrained youth leaders. Local government and teachers' unions object on the grounds that trained youth leaders should be employed instead, and the construction workers' union, representing painters in the direct labour department, prohibits the youngsters from redecorating their club premises. With patient diplomacy, most of these obstacles can be surmounted. Then M.S.C. and Urban Aid funds which made the projects possible are withdrawn.

That may seem an unduly depressing picture, but it is drawn from life. "Exclusion" is not just a figure of speech - a metaphor. "It is", to quote the Commission, "organised and imposed by powerful institutions which represent the rest of us". (Para. 15.6, p. 360.)

These three factors - poverty, powerlessness and exclusion - are related, again both as cause and as effect, to a fourth: public hostility to their victims: stigma for short - humiliation, if you prefer. Those feelings of hostility spill over onto the services on which poor people depend most heavily, and onto the staff of those services. Go into any ordinary social security office and note the different environments in the contributory and the supplementary benefit waiting rooms: you can tell that you're in different worlds. The Commission's report amounts to a rejection of this way of seeing human beings. "Each of us has faced ... a call", they say, "... to stand more closely alongside the risen Christ with those who are poor and powerless". (Para. 15.10, p. 360. Italics added.)

If it is to make any headway, an attack on poverty must also address the other three factors related to it: exclusion, powerlessness, and stigma. Otherwise it will fail. That "middle axiom" is perhaps the main conclusion to be drawn from the Commission's analysis. Money (or decent housing or better medical resources or other material things) may be desperately needed, but if we do not also welcome people back into society's mainstream and give them some power and self respect, even the money may be stripped from them. Note, for example, how the present Government announced that it would transfer funds from what it regarded as wasteful and indiscriminate subsidies on council housing to more selective housing benefits "targetted" at those who most need help. The subsidies were cut down ruthlessly and - predictably - housing benefit grew (though not by anything like as much). Now about 500 million pounds are to be cut from housing benefit. Meanwhile housing subsidies for richer people grow steadily larger; but they are concealed as tax relief on mortgage interest and never officially described as subsidies. (The Commission saw through that. "It is unjust" they said, "to tell those in bad housing that we cannot afford to do anything for them, that there is no money available to provide them with a home, and at the same time give subsidies to those on the highest income." Para. 10.98, p. 257.)

Action

I turn now to the implications of these ideas, focussing upon concrete and practical things which do not have to wait on a change of government.

People here today have contrasted talk with action - much to the discredit of the former. But talking, if the right things are said to enough people, may become an important kind of action. If, whenever wage increases for the more skilled and affluent are being discussed, we resolve always to compare the pay and conditions of the cleaners, waitresses and other low paid workers in the same organisation - payments which all have to be met from the same revenue - that would at least be a useful contribution to public education, and might in time take us further. One day we shall have to consider the range of incomes which is tolerable within one organisation or occupation - as the Swedes already do when they hammer out their incomes policies afresh, year by year.

But listening is even more important than talking. To help people who have special difficulties - like the single homeless, ex-prisoners, or patients coming out of long-stay hospitals, for example - we should start by asking them what they want. That will usually lead us to seek ways of bringing them into society's mainstream. Most of them will want ordinary housing, for instance, rather than special hostels which distinguish them from their neighbours and make it harder for them to get jobs and to gain acceptance within the community.

Once-for-all surveys of opinion are not enough. Public services must be accountable to their customers - particularly the most vulnerable of them. We should ensure that convincingly independent representatives of poverty-stricken groups serve on the committees responsible for agencies created to help them, and come to the professional conferences called to discuss their problems. It is greatly to the credit of Duncan Forrester and his colleagues that in conferences such as this they try to follow the principle that social problems should only be discussed in the presence of the kinds of people whose welfare is at stake.

But what, you may ask, can anyone do about such insights in these hard times? Our present Government seems to be bent on making Britain more unequal, more deeply divided, as incomes and living standards rise and taxes fall for the more skilled and the most affluent, while more and more of the less skilled fall out of work and their wages are driven downwards. Meanwhile the real value of child benefits is being driven downwards too. (Families with children were already the largest single group among those in poverty before that process began.)

Do not despair. Those of you who have any responsibility for organisations serving the public can do a great deal without spending a lot of money or waiting for a change in the law. Could you read the signature under the last letter you received from the Inland Revenue or the D.H.S.S.? Why shouldn't names be typed under the signatures of every official letter as a matter of course, and telephone extension numbers be added at the head of the letters? If ministers have their names written up outside their churches, why not the managers of housing offices, social work teams and social security office too? If bank staff have their names on the counter in front of them while Marks and Spencer's have theirs on their overalls, why not staff of the public services too? Anyone familiar with these services could add many more proposals which would make them more accountable, more humane and better equipped to deal with their customers on equal terms as fellow human beings.

Although such steps can be taken without waiting for changes in the law or extra money, they call for a new perspective on the world which may be harder to acquire and hold onto. "No-one minds being cast in the role of protector ... of the weak and powerless", say the Commission. "There is no threat here to one's superior position ... But to be a protagonist of social change may involve challenging those in power and risking the loss of one's own power". (Para. 3.7, p. 49.) Even in this relatively safe and tolerant country there are always such good reasons for avoiding those challenges. The powerful here are rarely tyrants or tycoons: more often, they are hard pressed councillors, overworked local government officers and civil servants - all doing their best to be fair. And it's not for ourselves that we want to retain their goodwill but for some struggling project run by underpaid workers who depend

on a precarious urban aid grant. If we, as applicants for that money, lose our reputations for "sound judgement", the project will founder. I have no infallible formula to help those contending with these pressures: I will only say that those of us who have secure jobs have a special obligation to support honest people who take risks in pursuit of their vision of the truth.

Meanwhile, behind these local difficulties there looms a larger threat. Most of us believe that we want to rebuild community and create a stronger sense of fellowship in a deeply divided society. But do we? When Britain multiplied unemployment by ten during the fifteen years after 1966, and fairly smoothly "managed" the exclusion of some four million people from work and the impoverishment of many of its younger and less skilled people, that was achieved precisely by destroying in the most deprived neighbourhoods the sense of community and the capacity for collective action - and collective anger. If the Commission's proposals help to rebuild those capacities, the first results may be turbulent indeed. For people have a lot to be angry about.

The route leading from defeat, depression and apathy to confident, competent independence leads through anger. I do not commend that; nor condemn. I only state a truth about everyone struggling through pain and humiliation. My examples have been drawn largely from unemployment, but many of the same things could be said about physical disablement, bereavement, or the break-up of a marriage.

When it is large numbers of young men who are the victims of pain and humiliation, the anger may reach flash-point. Public services and community leaders may have to take the risk of creating circumstances which could ignite that explosive potential. Until the terrible tragedies which took place there last October, Broadwater Farm was a show place for all concerned with community work and decentralised, democratic local government. Marvellous things had been achieved by this community and some of the public services working there. Expectations had been raised. But if some services do not keep pace with the transition to a new, community-based style of operation and one of those is the police force, the situation is dangerous.

If you want, above all, to keep deprived and potentially turbulent people under control, then alcohol, drugs, depression, mental illness, and violence confined within the family are much safer than a community which has recovered its capacity to take vigorous collective action. We must never "sell" fellowship and new perceptions of poverty which give dignity back to poor people by arguing that such policies will keep them docile. Nor should we abandon the attempt to achieve those things if turbulence results: it may, in a sense, be evidence of our success.

But we must never assume that turbulence will lead in progressive, humane directions, or that change is necessarily good. When people take to the streets in a peacetime, parliamentary democracy, the most brutal of them usually win. Finding a constructive way through the conflicts which accompany the rebuilding of despairing and divided communities will tax to the utmost the capacities of anyone who attempts the task.

Conclusion

The Commission were aware that these formidable tasks will expose their Church to much hostility if it embarks upon them with real determination. "In the Middle Ages," they say, "it was taken for granted that the whole of political and economic life was an appropriate sphere for the concern and influence of the Church ... the separation of religious faith and practice from the rest of life, and the compartmentalization of religion within a fundamentally secular understanding of the world, is made possible only by a dualistic approach to the human person. Such an approach has been popular in the West only since the Enlightenment and may already be obsolete. It is only in this relatively brief period that the question could have arisen of a gospel which was not concerned for society as much as for the individual." (Para. 3.8, p. 50.)

The Commission were properly concerned about their own constituency - the Church of England. But exactly the same questions should be put to every profession. Many teachers and researchers have been taught that science and scholarship must be purged of passion: politics and moral commitment are for the evenings and weekends, and should be kept out of the common room. Business managers have their own versions of this code - a version which may lead them, for example, to refuse to answer questions about their race relations put to them by a large inner-city customer (the Greater London Council). Some building societies - luckily not all - have forgotten that they are part of a movement which gained special privileges from the state because it was devoted to the cause of housing the people; they therefore think it proper to starve impoverished areas and their people of investment on the grounds that the societies' first loyalty must always be to their depositors. Trade union officials have their versions of the code too: how many of them, for example, would be prepared to ask (as the N.U.M. did) that their members' pension funds be invested in a socially responsible, not just a maximally profitable, way? How many confine themselves instead for fighting for their members' immediate interests - and stopping the youth club repaint its own premises? If justice is to be done for the "urban priority areas" explored by the Commission, every profession must question its assumptions about such matters. And the Churches, whose more active members are so largely drawn from these professions, should press them to do so.

Major changes in this country's policies are rare. The Commission has contributed to the stock of ideas and of recorded, practical experience which will be available some day to a Government that seeks more humane responses to the nation's problems. But other people are assembling very different ideas for this occasion: water cannon, rubber and plastic bullets, soldiers on the streets, the end of trial by jury, the abolition of independent local government ... these responses to crisis, already well tried across the Irish sea, are waiting on the shelf too. Only if enough people work out better ways of doing things, try them out convincingly and spread news of what they have learnt will the more humane responses gain a hearing. It is to that task that we must address ourselves while there is time.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE REPORT

DUNCAN B. FORRESTER
University of Edinburgh

There appear to be two distinct theologies in Faith in the City, which sit rather uneasily together and do not seem to be closely related. There is an implicit theology which rarely appears on the surface of the argument but is undoubtedly influential in the shaping of the method and approach of the Report; for this I have considerable enthusiasm. And there is an explicit theology, laid out in chapters three and four, which it must be said is bland in a distinctively Anglican way, and academic in the sense of being detached. It is not surprising that this theology is not integrated in a wholly convincing way with the rest of the Report as it is hardly capable of throwing light on the great issues which are addressed.

Five themes in the implicit theology seem to me particularly deserving attention; all of them have to do with method. First, the conviction that it is absolutely necessary to attend to the poor, the victims, the recipients of policy if the discussion is to be realistic and the recommendations human and such as to lead to a more just society. The role of the Church is in significant measure to 'speak for the dumb' and the voice of the poor is a major theological datum. Christian theology is too important to be left to the theologians, and policy is too important to be left to experts, bureaucrats and politicians. The views, insights and feelings of the people affected by policy are of fundamental importance.

Secondly, there is a conviction that a responsibility is laid upon Christians to interpret

recruit working-class candidates for the priesthood; and it does concentrate upon urban populations. However, it has done comparatively little to share buildings and resources with other denominations, it has not always been very active in promoting social well-being in the community, and has shown no signs of developing a non-stipendiary ministry (or 'worker priesthood' along the French lines) and little of training an effective laity.

Indeed, it is in the area of ecumenism that Scotland could still learn something from England. With a few important exceptions, such as Livingston, New Town, shared ministries have seldom been a part of UPAs. The criticisms of Faith in the City at this point are particularly relevant to Scotland. If the churches really were serious about UPA ministry they would I believe be forced to work more closely together, to put to one side some of their historical differences, and to care for the bulk of the population where it actually is. Ecumenism will certainly not solve all of the many problems present in Scottish UPAs, but continued church divisions, parallel structures and unequally proportioned resources will do little to heal them.

1. E. R. Wickham, Church and People in an Industrial City, Lutterworth, London, 1957.
2. Leslie Paul, The Deployment and Payment of the Clergy, Church of England Information Office, London, 1964.
3. Faith in the City: The Report of the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas, Church House Publishing, London, 1985.

THE CHURCH IN THE SCOTTISH CITY

1. The Rev. JOHN MILLER Castlemilk³

1. The Church with power; and the Church without.

Other speakers have pinpointed the fact that the Gospel is at work in the housing schemes in the lives of ordinary people, even though the formal, organised Churches feel they have no foothold there.

The Report, Faith in the City, is written by people with power: - when referring to 'the Church' in the first person plural, as "we", (e.g. 1.50; 3.7; etc., etc.,) the Report invariably reflects the view of people who themselves hold power. Nowhere does the notion emerge that people without power are, here and now, already 'the Church'. Hence we are operating with two definitions of 'the Church'. Firstly the formal, decision-making organisation which calls itself 'the Church'; secondly the ordinary people who are living out their ordinary lives faithful to the Lord, but not at home in the formal power-wielding Church.

Faith in the City is a 22-ounce-weight exercise in the powerful talking to one another.

2. The Church of Scotland and the ordinary life of a housing scheme

I shall offer three examples of how the formal, organised 'Church' resists opportunities to see things from the point of view of those who are outside the circle of power.

i The Minister's House

When I was called to the Church at which I am at present the Minister, I accepted the job before I had seen the Manse. The sad circumstances of the death of the previous Minister, - he had been killed in a road accident, and his family were still staying in the Manse, - had meant that my wife and I had not been able to see the house.

On seeing it, however, we knew at once that it would not do for us. Almost two miles from the Church, eight rooms, the top two floors of a large Victorian villa, with a full-size billiard table in one of the rooms. We sensed that our lives would become divided: the family would have a Rutherglen life in a quiet residential street; I would be trying to involve my life in a parish of crowded tenements, 5,000 houses, in the Glasgow housing scheme. So, we decided to move house.

There was no difficulty in obtaining the Let of a Corporation House, a Councillor bringing our case to the Special Housing Committee. But with the Presbytery it was a different matter. Almost two years it took, with the matter being dealt with by the Superintendence Committee, - the Committee whose job it is to discipline Ministers who have stepped out of line, and to give psychiatric care to those who have lost their mind. For a Minister to seek to live in accommodation similar to that of the housing scheme parishioners was regarded by the formal 'Church' as a matter of that order.

ii The Church Buildings

The costs of the upkeep and maintenance of church buildings falls directly on the local congregation. Widows, the low-paid, the unemployed - the very poorest of our British society who cannot afford adequately to heat their own homes or feed and clothe their families properly - are expected to use and sustain a complex of buildings valued at around £750,000 at today's prices. In this way does the 'Church' express its understanding of the conditions of life of those in the housing schemes of the cities.

iii The School Council Attendance Committee

I was appointed by the Presbytery to the Regional Council Education Department's local School Council, as a 'Representative of Religious Interests'. I found myself appointed to serve as a member of the Attendance Sub-Committee. Summoned to appear before this committee came delinquent parents, whose children had been failing to attend school. The sub-committee was empowered to issue severe reprimands or to remit the cases to the Sheriff Court for sentence. Often the children who failed to attend school came from families who were labouring under most appalling difficulties. Sometimes I had already encountered the family, through the death of a parent or a break-down in family life. It shocked me that membership of the Attendance Sub-Committee should be in any way the medium through which the Church was relating to these families. Yet my protests were met with incomprehension. Both within and without the organised 'Church', among those with power, it seemed a not inappropriate structure for the relationship between the Minister and the ordinary parishioners.

These examples illustrate attitudes exhibited by the formal 'Church'. This hostile 'Church' is the stony ground in which the ordinary followers of the Lord in the housing schemes have to search for nourishment in their life of faith.

3. The Eye of the Needle

I suggest that when reading Reports on urban problems, such as 'Faith in the

City', there are three questions to ask about their compilers; and when engaging in discussion with those who express anxiety about the plight of those who live in 'urban priority areas', there are three questions to bear in mind:

1. What is their level and security of income?
2. Where do they live?
3. Where do they send their children to school?

To the extent to which they have sought to align these areas of their own lives with the plight of the poor, to that extent their words carry weight. For it was Jesus who said, 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also'. The rest is only words.

2. MARTHA SKINNIDER

When I think of the scene in the Scottish peripheral schemes it is not statistics or specific problems which spring to mind, but feelings. They surface easily - hopelessness, frustration, a feeling of being worthless, a feeling of being trapped.

People are trapped, trapped in poor housing, with poor facilities and services. They are trapped in areas where few people want to live. As only those with little or no choice come to live in deprived areas, they are often those who have problems and are least able to cope with the difficulties of the areas themselves. From this situation there is no escape. Deprived areas are at the bottom of the housing barrel, and public sector housing policy is such that movement can be made only sideways, from one deprived area to another, seldom can movement be made upwards. The frustration engendered by this breeds vandalism and violence and crime.

Over and above this a message of worthlessness comes loud and clear from the lack of employment. For the young there is an overwhelming feeling of hopelessness - they can see no future for themselves; parents suffer in that they cannot provide adequately for their children; men and women have lost their dignity in depending on DHSS giro. This frustration together with the long hours of idleness adds to the crime, the vandalism and the violence.

However, this is not the whole picture. Where people have little and are vulnerable they have to rely on each other. Deprivation calls forth not only violence and vandalism, but also a bond of neighbourliness, a caring and support for each other.

Frustration can call forth courage in the face of a hopeless situation. There are many groups who persevere steadily in trying to better their area and pit themselves against the system in trying to get things done. There is also the courage of those who go on going on in the face of seemingly overwhelming odds. If the majority in deprived areas are not churchgoers, many of them are believers, and they do pray in their hearts. Powerlessness and helplessness makes them aware of their need of God. Areas of urban deprivation are spiritual areas. God is very much with His poor. What they need is to become aware of this, and realising it, to use this knowledge to change not only their lives but their neighbourhoods. The Church's problem is that it is not relevant to the lives of those in deprived areas. It comes from outside their lived experience even where church buildings are physically in the deprived area. It seems to stress regular attendance at services, ideals of good behaviour, keeping rules - it is respectable. All of this can cut off many, in their own eyes from the church. Academic theology cannot speak to the people. The church must come out from behind its institutional walls and find ways of working with those in deprived areas - not in the sense of bringing something to those who do not have it, but of sharing with them a growing awareness and recognition of the God who is very much with them. But to do this the church must be ready to

admit its need of learning from and being evangelised by those in areas of urban deprivation.

This evangelism will not draw people from the community to be concerned with the maintenance of an institutionalised church, but will foster the growth of a living Christian church in the community itself.

3 SARAH KILBEY

We're talking about minorities who lack the basic necessities of life, whether it is food, clothing, shelter, warmth or health and are denied access to the means of solving their problems. These may be black people, old people or handicapped people, as well as people who simply lack money. I am deaf and teach lipreading to other adults who have become deaf in adulthood. (We lack an aspect of our health, and are prevented from gaining the help that we need to enable us to take part in everyday life so we are poor, too. I have had a tremendous battle this past year convincing the authorities of the need for lipreading classes and that deaf adults are deserving of help). All priority groups like the ones I have mentioned become marginalised, as a result. They have in common their powerlessness, their exclusion from the mainstream of society and the fact that they are treated badly, and so denied the opportunity of becoming fully human. My lipreading classes become self-help groups, because we all share the same disability. As well as teaching the skills of lipreading and providing the information about environmental aids, we also share our experience and exchange information which might be of help. Confidence and morale begin to improve and people feel better about themselves. However, once this stage is reached deaf people then begin to assert themselves and demand that hearing people listen to them and provide them with what they need in society to enable them to cope. This can be painful and may, even, seem threatening to the wider society but it is the only means by which conditions will improve so that they become fully integrated into society. This method of standing alongside and listening to/being attentive to/learning from, in order to then provide real support to self-help groups which work from the bottom up, it seems to me, are the only legitimate and lasting way that poor people will be helped and enabled to break out of the state that they are in and being kept in at present. The Church talks a lot about standing alongside the poor but it is often rather hollow talk. Recently, in Scotland, we had the first Conference ever to be held here about deafness. I had made sure that all Chairmen of the relevant social policy Committees of the major Churches were invited. None attended. On the grapevine of the Episcopal Church, at any rate, I learned that the invitations had caused a certain amount of consternation but, in the end, it was decided that it was all right not to bother "Sarah Kilby's going and she's deaf ...". But that's just it! I didn't need to be there but all the rest of them did!

**"Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods Before Me"
(Levi's Advertisement, Early Seventies):
The Need for Liberation
in a Consumerist Society**

Dorothee Soelle

About halfway through her essay Dorothee Soelle writes, "I want my theology to become a prayer." Although it is misleading to infer from this that she wishes to redefine theology as prayer, her impatience with abstract methodological canons which would preclude that possibility ipso facto is evident. Soelle believes that religious language has lost its power to give expression to the human need for self-renewal and to challenge individuals to embrace life "in the emphatic sense." This failure is symptomatic of a culture-wide indifference to integral human values and thus to the spiritual dimension of experience. Unaware of the awesome significance of this process of deconversion, inhabitants of First World nations have become hopelessly ensnared in a culture system that perceives value almost entirely in quantitative terms—a system which demands an ultimate commitment to having rather than to being and that consumes plastic as if it were the bread of life.

Soelle contends that if theology is to challenge the enslaving ethic of "hedonistic consumerism," it must move beyond debilitating distinctions between spiritual salvation and the process of liberation and evolve into a language of "existential interpretation" which fuses Christian witness and critical reflection.

Dorothee Soelle is a German Protestant theologian and writer. She is presently teaching at Union Theological Seminary in New York. She is the author of many books and essays including *Christ the Representative* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), *Political Theology*, trans. John Shelley (Philadelphia:

4

To remember Jerusalem means to define our need for liberation. It means to denounce the Egypt in which we live.

Pier Paolo Pasolini,² director of *The Gospel According to Matthew*, was a member of the Communist Party of Italy until he was kicked out because of his sexual preference. He has given an analysis of what has occurred in Italy since the onset of the 1970s. This analysis is informed by both a cultural conservatism and a Marxist understanding of political economy. He speaks of a "revolution from the right," the effects of which have been more devastating than any political overthrow in this century. In his opinion this revolution has been able to destroy or to redefine previously subsisting institutions such as the family, culture, language, and the Church. Pasolini calls this new state of affairs *consumismo*. He claims that where historic fascism failed to touch the soul of the Italian people, this new consumerism represents a total and relentless repression of what once had been called soul. Pasolini lived in a time which he calls the end of the "age of bread." Plastic had not yet become the basic food, and although religion was going to die out, the need for meaning was still acute. During the age of bread, religion had provided a language to talk about the need for meaning (*das Sinnbeduerfnis*), about the human capacity for truth (*Wahrheitsfaehigkeit*), and about existential unconditionality (*existenzielle Unbedingtheit*). Religious language was the reservoir of a general language utilized to express the general consciousness that life was less a given than it was a tenuous gift. Pasolini was one who was not ashamed of talking about the holiness of life.

The Lost Age of Bread

In the age of bread life could be experienced as meaningless, and human anxieties about losing the self and losing the meaning of life could still be addressed by the language of religion. "Save us from hell" used to be a prayer for centuries. The anxiety over the possible loss of a meaningful existence seems obsolete in today's world. People with such feelings about life in our culture today are considered mad.

Humanity's deepest needs once found their expression in the language of religion. There was a need to be different; not different from others, but from the old self. "Create a pure heart in me, O God, and give me a new and steadfast spirit" (Ps. 51:10). A prayer like this presupposed certain human needs for renewal and change that would have been destroyed. In the time of hedonism, all wishes and needs that would move toward existential unconditionality have been manipulated and exchanged. All the needs that once had reference to being have now been exchanged for new ones which have reference to more having. Further, the language of existential unconditionality presupposed the possible wholeness of our lives. "Set your mind on God's kingdom and his justice before anything else, and all the rest will come to you as well" (Matt. 6:33). There are still situations in our lives in which we may experience ourselves as whole and unseparated—as being one and being

Fortress, 1974), *Suffering*, trans. R. Everett (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), *Death by Bread Alone*, trans. David L. Scherdt (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), and *Revolutionary Patience*, trans. Rita and Robert Kimber (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1977). The Response by Schubert Ogden is an edited version of Ogden's verbal response to Soelle given at the conference in Chicago.

Exile

"The real exile of Israel in Egypt was that they had learned to endure it." The real exile of Christians in the First World is that we have learned to endure it. We do not consider ~~our~~ living in the affluent societies as being in captivity. We rather have adjusted ourselves so much to Egypt that we feel at home. We have adjusted ourselves to the Egyptian lifestyle. We have adopted the basic beliefs of the Egyptians. We see individualism as the measure of human development, and we share assumptions of history's caprice—sometimes this group on top, sometimes another group. We have learned to endure the exile so well that we no longer see ourselves as exiled people—as strangers in a strange land. Quite the contrary, we attempt to Egyptize the whole world. We see countries that have not yet adjusted to the capitalistic lifestyle and value-system as "not yet" developed. Rather than take the historical context of our present-day Egypt seriously, we have ontologized it. We say that the things we find distasteful are due to the sinful nature of humanity. We have come to understand idiosyncratic human qualities like competitiveness, greed, and possessiveness as essential elements of human nature.

The Egyptian way of life, to put it simply, conforms to the way things are. We have forgotten that some people prefer the desert to our cities, the struggle to our peace, and would choose hunger before eating our meat produced from the grain the starving lack. To learn to endure the exile is to suppress even our thirst for justice. It means we have become one with the objective cynicism of the prevailing culture. We sometimes pray for political prisoners in foreign countries, but we conveniently forget to ask who supports those oppressive governments. Neither do we ask where these countries get their weapons or who trains their torturers. Within our mainstream culture, we see no need for liberation. Our whole education is aimed at rooting out remnants of this need.

If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither away;
let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth
if I do not remember you,
if I do not set Jerusalem
above my highest joy [Ps. 137:5-6 NEB].

aware of being alive in the emphatic sense of the word. All our capacities and dimensions—our past and our future—are to be experienced. The oil in the lamps of the virgins who expect the bridegroom served as an image for this wholeness. If they lack the oil, everything is lacking. They are "foolish" and not ready for eternal life. They are distracted by a thousand things.

Existential unconditionality constitutes itself in the indivisible wholeness in favor of which I should decide. There is an integrative and a voluntary component in the concept. Wholeness and decision are constitutive. The biblical demand "Choose life!" presupposes that there is life in the emphatic and unconditioned sense of the word, and that life can be chosen and grasped, or abandoned and missed. "I summon heaven and earth to witness against you this day: I offer you the choice of life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life and then you and your descendants will live" (Deut. 30:19). Religious tradition has developed a language that reminds us of the emphasis on life. This represents to us life's threats as well as the possibilities of being rescued. As long as this language still communicates, it gives emphasis to a life which is both possible and tangible.

This language, however, has been stripped of its meaning in the new age of hedonistic fascism, as Pasolini sees it. "Fascism" in this concept refers to the totalitarian character of the new culture which permeates every thought and every feeling, every action, passion, and omission. It is omnipresent and omnipotent. Pasolini talks of the ideal image of a young couple in love and its mythic quality in the old culture. An "aura" surrounded the pair. There was a promise of happiness and a fear of fragility surrounding the two young people. The two of them were more than just two young people. It is precisely this "more" which has been lost. What I am trying to say may sound vague, but without an understanding of this mythic quality of life that transcends the given, it is impossible to understand even a line of Dante, Shakespeare, or Goethe, or to appreciate any of the works of Rembrandt or Chagall.

The fragile quality of this relationship in which two people participate was once a part of the promise of life. The point I want to make, however, is not primarily concerned with high culture, but it has reference to ordinary people who once were able to touch the mythic quality of life in their day-to-day existence. No matter how vigorously religion was rejected as being oppressive to the individual, the religious was the mediator between this emphasis on life and the world of everyday existence. But the young couple that we now see on television has no aura. They seem removed from any form of transcendence. Their life is entirely expressed within the culture of consumerism. They no longer have a need for a language which might speak about their pain and their hopes. Life is no longer at stake; it is indeed worth as much as one can buy. I have often heard American tourists who traveled in countries behind the Iron Curtain say, "Look at those empty show windows. There are no colors. Life isn't worthwhile here." In the age of bread show windows were not considered to be the criterion of life's worth. But this age ended in the mid-1950s in West Germany. In Italy it ended in the early 1970s. Pasolini

rightly calls the prevailing consumerism a new fascism because it simply destroys all human values softly without physical violence. It does this by employing new means of communication and information.

When the age of bread is gone it no longer makes sense to share bread and wine. The emphatic understanding of life affirmed by the Judeo-Christian tradition was precisely this being-at-stake. Life was addressed as the tension between the possibility of authenticity and the omnipresent threat of death. Existential unconditionality goes hand in hand with existential anxiety. The emphatic understanding of life, seen as developing new qualities and threatened by eternal loss—this whole emphatic concept of life includes an emphatic-traumatic relationship to death. We are killable! To know this is more important than to repeat that we are mortals. To be killable means that this emphatic meaning of life can be taken away from us. It may be that nobody knows as much about what I am trying to say with awkward words like unconditionality, capacity for truth, and need for meaning, than the psychically disturbed. People in mental institutions know that one may lose one's life before death.

Consumerism

In the age of bread happiness was defined differently from the way it is defined in the culture of consumerism. The young man and the young woman on the television show who have no aura around them are merciless and graceless. They no longer need grace and they no longer expect it. Nobody even entertains the idea of saying to them, "God be with you." But it is precisely this wish to bestow a blessing upon the couple which was reflected in our old culture. The aura of fragile happiness which rendered them into moving, touching people is completely absent. The ideal television couple does not touch us; there is no need to wish for them, to pray for them. Pray for what? They will buy what they wish. Thus our prayer for them freezes on our lips.

The blasphemous use of language is a language free from memories, threats, and wounds. The slogan for Levi jeans, "Thou shalt have no other jeans before me," captures the spirit of the second industrial revolution and the mutation of values that is accrued from it. The rotation of production and consumption runs smoothly and efficiently. People are cut off from the rhythm of nature. Our need for a renewal of life also disappears, and we forget our need for rest after working, for night after day, for cleansing after pollution, and for stillness after noise. Without this sustaining rhythm we find ourselves caught up in the false rhythm of incessant and meaningless activity. Everything just continues. The pill as well as the machine-like bleeding which occurs when we refrain from taking it once a month are powerful symbols of the replacement of natural rhythm by one that is totally independent from bodily and psychic conditions.

As surely as we have severed our relationship with experienced nature, we

Third World and First World people, but we in the affluent societies tend to overlook its fascist dimensions. Our immediate experience of the beast is of its hedonistic side rather than of its oppressive side. As Marx pointed out, the ruling and the exploited classes represent two sides of the same alienation from life.

As we become aware of our situation, our need for a new language grows. The lack of expressiveness in the language of the dominant culture is a phenomenon which has often been described. Expressiveness is seen as an idiosyncratic quality which characterizes the language of the lower classes, of women, and of the inhabitants of certain particular locations. Its destruction is an ongoing process. The capacities for self-expression which were strongly developed in the regional dialects in Italy, for example, have been extirpated. The language of television is now the dominant language which eliminates all regional, professional, and group languages. This bringing-into-line (*Gleichschaltung*) of the language of nondominant cultures means the loss of expressiveness in languages of the dominating media. Scientific language, in particular, has suppressed the expressiveness of nondominant cultures for a long time. It is difficult for women to communicate in scientific language because it conflicts with their societal role as carriers of expressiveness. Speaking a normal male phrase often seems to me like saying nothing at all, and this saying nothing seems to be the educational goal of the prevailing languages of science and television.

Liberation Theology

Schubert Ogden has recently presented his understanding of language in theology in the context of his criticisms of liberation theology. Ogden's description of the use of language by liberationists claims that they tend "to obscure any distinction between theology and witness." Rather than obscuring the distinction, liberationists lift up witness as a return to a first-hand theological language capable of a norm of self-expression filled with passion and struggle. The language of testimony, witness, and confession is considered by liberation theologians as the theological language. They feel no need to transcend this type of God talk by systematization into a doctrinal and/or metaphysical language.

Liberation theologians are skeptical about the usefulness of the distinction between the witness and the theologian; between the language of prayer and sermons on the one hand, and the language of theological reflection on the other. A theological language that has turned its back on praying and preaching and tries to define itself as independent of piety seems inadequate. At the very least we should expect that the deepest reflection will lead us back to its source, namely, the language of prayer. I conceive of the language of prayer as a union of thought, emotion, and will. To pray means to wish, to be open to the transcendent expressively, thoughtfully, and in an unlimited way.

I want my theology to become a prayer, and in light of this the distinction

have severed ourselves from experienced history that transcends us. Consumerism has changed our conversational culture totally. The most seriously discussed questions are now concerned with how to save taxes and where to get what at a better price. The sense of living in a particular epoch is no longer a framework of speech. The point of reference in historical suffering which was the kingdom of God and its new justice is now an obsolete concept, unthinkable, and not to be mentioned. The cyclical understanding of history has triumphed over the eschatological one with its accompanying goals and hopes. Lack of natural continuity and planned obsolescence of memory are necessary for hedonistic consumerism, because to remember is to be less determined by consumerism. The loss of history as a human horizon of meaning brings with it the absence of a future and an undramatic hopelessness.

It is not only the slogan that uses the first commandment which is blasphemy, but any advertising. This attempt to focus our interests and life-priorities on hairspray, cat food, and traveling to the Virgin Islands represents an assault on the One in whose image I am created. It is an assault on human dignity. Consumerism means that my eyes are offended, my ears are obstructed, and my hands are robbed of their creativity. My relationships with other people now fall under laws of which earlier generations could not even dream. My longings for absoluteness, for life in an emphatic sense, are stolen from me. Marx spoke about "universal salability," but its devastating consequences for the individual and day-to-day life are apparent only now.

The age of bread was also a time when it was possible to communicate about our expectations, wishes, and dreams. Religious language transmits a sharing of hope with others, as well as what I call the emphatic understanding of life. The public death of this language and its replacement by the public language of advertising is a major cultural event. The limits of our language are the limits of our world. What is not spoken does not exist, at least not in the emphatic sense of existence described to us by the existentialist philosophers. We no longer talk about the kingdom and its justice, about our prayers for the young couple, or about the possibility of going to hell while living comfortably in a nice house. If this whole language dies out, it follows that we have experienced a major shift in the nature of our needs as well. The need for liberation itself will die if we cease to communicate it to others. It may be more precise to say that the limits of our language are the limits of our needs. To transcend the limits of a given language then means to clarify and to intensify our need to liberate ourselves from our present situation.

There is a root experience which grounds a liberation theology for First World citizens. The point of departure is the world in which thou shalt have no other jeans before me. This root experience is the totalitarianism of the hedonistic culture. The voice of Levi's is the voice of God. To grow up in this culture is to listen to the voice of this God. Our father in heaven is the hedonistic fascist beast. Our need for liberation has a different starting point than the struggle for economic justice. Our being exploited is different from the exploitation of the Third World. Still, it is one beast that rules over us,

between witnessing and doing theology is neither adequate nor useful. This distinction seems to be related to the more basic distinction which bourgeois liberalism has made between private and public life. To liberalism, religion is a private affair. Thus, to bear witness becomes a private matter. Public talk, it is thought, must have the qualities of generalization and systematization. To bear witness already has a public quality where the language of true prayer is understandable. If praxis and faith are seen as essential, and theory and theology are seen as handmaidens of faith without any value in themselves separate from these, then this distinction concerning modes of language loses relevance.

Concepts of God must be evaluated according to a functional criterion. We must ask whether they are liberating or oppressive. We have no interest in a metaphysical truth claim about God's being in itself. Truth in the understanding of liberation theologians is essentially "concrete": any metaphysical or revelational doctrine of God makes truth abstract. Lenin, after reading Hegel, coined the phrase "truth is concrete." It was also written on Bertolt Brecht's desk when he was a political refugee in Denmark. The phrase has a meaning which can be understood in both existentialist and Marxist terms. Truth cannot be said to occur apart from us. Truth is not timeless, but it happens among us. Truth is essentially related to our making it come true. Talking about our capacity for truth is talking about our being enabled to love effectively in a way that changes this world. Which language then is adequate to talk about truth? Returning to the discussion among existentialist theologians in the 1950s, one may ask the question in this way: Is existential interpretation possible? Is there a possible third way between a theoretical objective talk that excludes passion, self-expression, and the call to struggle, and a merely personal immediate talk which excludes rationality and objectivity?

Bultmann, following the early Heidegger, made a three-fold distinction pertaining to theological languages. First, there is the theoretical objective talk of the theologian, a language without fear and trembling that is strictly opposed to the language of the existing thinker. Second, there is the practical-existential talk of the witness, which often lacks intelligibility, but has the qualities of immediacy and personalism—close to what Buber describes as the I-thou relationship. But in Bultmann's understanding there is an alternative to objectivism and subjectivism, which he and Heidegger called "existential interpretation." They made an almost untranslatable distinction between existential immediacy and existential interpretation.¹ Bultmann claimed that there was a third possibility which moved beyond both the language of the uncommitted objective philosopher and the language of witness born of a specific *kairos*. The whole concept of existential interpretation includes a certain tension. It is "existential" in the sense that it is committed, impassioned, and praxis-oriented. It is "interpretative" in the sense that it is reflective, reasonable, and theory-oriented. The Bultmannians who set out to find this third language may have failed. Some of them returned to neo-ortho-

doxy and its objective talk about the kerygma as the salvation event. Others, outsiders like Fritz Buri, went back to the existential thinker Søren Kierkegaard (who if he had to choose would more likely situate himself in the category of witness rather than theology). In any case, most of those who entertained this dream of an existential interpretation never reached this promised land of a new common language.

Today's liberation theologians share many of these same problems. They have made progress in their attempts to relate faith and theology in a new way. They emphasize praxis over theory, action over reflection, people's exegesis over academic exegesis, and political struggle over solitary contemplation. They have also redefined the goals of theological education. It is considered better by many liberation theologians to become a militant organizer for the kingdom than a Harvard professor of theology. But what does this tendency reveal about the use of languages? Which language is adequate for liberation theology? Is the confessional language sufficient or do we need a universal language? Ogden has suggested the use of two criteria for theological God talk: (1) appropriateness to the Christian witness and its tradition, and (2) intelligibility to human existence, especially to the nonbeliever. Confessional talk, in his opinion, lacks the quality of critical reflection that would render it adequate relative to both criteria.

I agree with Schubert Ogden in his use of these two criteria, but I disagree with his judgment that existential talk cannot satisfy these criteria. In reading the texts of liberation theology, I do not miss the presence of critical reflection on the tradition or its intelligibility to the non-Christian world. It is necessary at this juncture to give some examples of a liberating theology in the form of confession or witnessing.

In one of the few debates of historical relevance in the German Bundestag, Gustav Heinemann, who later became state president, made an unforgettable remark during the time of the German rearmament and integration into the Western coalition. In the interest of a peace-seeking policy he said, "Jesus Christ did not die against Karl Marx but for all of us." This statement had a political-theological quality. It was polemical in that it was opposed to those who used Christ to justify German rearmament. It was a confessional statement, unprecedented in the Bundestag. Yet, it was understandable for everybody in that culture, and it was, indeed, faithful to former witnesses of the Church, especially to members of the Confessing Church.

Let me give you another example of what I would call liberation theology. It is a text written on the wall of a harbor in Mar del Plata by unknown people. According to Eduardo Galeano, an exiled writer from Uruguay, it says, "I am seeking Christ, but I don't find him. I am seeking myself, but I do not find me. But I do find my neighbor and the three of us get started on our way."⁴ Notice that these words are not written on a church wall or in a book, but on the wall of a harbor. They are not written by a well-known theologian, but by unknown hands. It is not I, the seeker, and Christ who communicate

inside of a church religiously, but we, the three of us, who are marching on in the communication of the struggle.

Let me present another text that further obscures the line of distinction between theological reflection and immediate existential language, and that demonstrates once more that liberation theology in Latin America is not primarily the invention of some well-read theologians, but indeed emerges from the struggle. This example is a catechism picture that is used for religious education. On the lower part of the sheet there is a hill on which there are many crosses. On the crosses there are words written that indicate the meaning of the cross for the people: hunger, alienation, oppression, illiteracy, torture, *favela*. On the upper part of the sheet there is the resurrected Christ, and on his side it reads: peace, love, freedom, progress, conscientization, life.

When I attempt to understand this theological textbook, I am all the more skeptical about another criticism of Schubert Ogden's which has reference to the distinction between liberation and emancipation. Ogden reproached liberation theologians for confusing God the redeemer with God the emancipator. The little catechism picture is a good example of what I would call the oneness of the process of liberation, and what Schubert Ogden would call the confusion of two liberation events which must be distinguished. The one, in his view, has to do with the redemption from death, transience, and sin, in other words, liberation in a theological-spiritual sense. The other, the worldly one, concerns the emancipation from the diverse forms of oppression, as economic, political, racial, and sexual.

I find that the better texts of liberation theology do have this specific quality that renders the distinction between reflective theological and immediate witness-talk as purely technical. The claim of liberation theologians to do theology with the people, by the people, and for the people is not necessarily anti-intellectualist. It rejects, however, the hierarchical order which places theory over praxis, and which has been the dominant pattern in Western culture. To hang up a poster from Latin America which says "Evangelio es lucha" (the gospel is the struggle), or to listen to the *campesinos* and fisherfolk in Solentiname at Bible study makes theology relevant in a new way.⁵ The distinction between witness and reflection, in terms of a sociology of knowledge that mirrors the labor and power division between laypeople and theologians, no longer has any specific productive function. It stabilizes class distinctions that should be and could be reduced through the language of liberation. The poster, the prayer, and the catechism do not lack, in my perspective, critical reflection or intelligibility.

Ogden's thesis is indeed a frontal attack from the right on any form of liberation theology. It is essential for us to decide whether we understand emancipation/liberation as one historical process that allows us to talk about God the liberator who operates in, with, and among us in a liberating way, or whether we must distinguish God's activities into two sets of actions which can be separated within a nonclassical, yet dualistic scheme. The question is

this: Are the reasons we need liberation twofold, one set bound to our mortal, frail, and guilty being, and another set defined by historical conditions like slavery, patriarchy, and class domination? Do we need liberation in the emphatic and wholistic sense that liberation theology has tried to develop, or do we fragment our liberation needs by receiving one form of liberation from God who is the redeemer and another form of liberation from an agent such as a liberation army?

"Choose Life"

Let us return to the starting point, the world in which I must live, and which shall have no other jeans before God than Levi's. Let us go back to a text of Paul in Romans 8 where he talks about the sufferings we now endure.

For the created universe waits with eager expectation for God's sons [and daughters] to be revealed. It was made the victim of frustration, not by its own choice, but because of him who made it so; yet always there was hope, because the universe itself is to be freed from the shackles of mortality and enter upon the liberty and splendor of the children of God. Up to the present, we know, the whole created universe groans in all its parts as if in the pangs of childbirth [Rom. 8:19-22].

I find three things in this text: (1) the groaning of the universe, which I take in both dimensions of nature and history; (2) the need for liberation in a wholistic understanding; and (3) God as the liberator who needs our participation.

There is a groaning of the universe born of the need to be free. Earlier times might have heard this text with a certain ironic distance because it seems to naively anthropologize nature. The exploitation of the ecological environment may have made us more open to the message of this text; a message that is indeed a unifying one, its groaning is everywhere. Nature and history are together in what Allen Ginsberg has named in his famous poem "Howl." They are present in the words of the German writer, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, when he describes the "whimpering" (*das Gewimmer*) he hears in the streets, the houses, and the nights.⁶ The frustration of Paul's universe needs humanity. The first task of those who understand themselves as the sons and daughters of God, therefore, is to listen to the cry, to hear the groaning and the howl. But how can we listen if our ears are offended from one hour to the next by the noise of hedonistic fascism? To listen to the howl, to its rage, its despair, its revenge, to listen to the offended and raped earth, and to listen to the cry in ourselves and in our brothers and sisters is the first step in doing theology. To listen to the cry means to remember human dignity, which is our capacity for truth. It means to insist upon the possible meaning of life and upon the necessity of a language to communicate that meaning even to those who we cannot hear crying. Once the howling, the whimpering, and the

groaning are heard, the next step is to name them. Paul does this when he speaks of "the pangs of childbirth." He might as easily have called it a death rattle. It often sounds like that. Still he gives a birth-name to the cry.

In our context, it is important to keep in mind the wholeness of the need for liberation. The distinction between God's work as redemption and God's work as emancipation causes problems because it presupposes a double set of needs which can be separated by imposing a classical framework which includes the distinctions between the mind and body, spirit and praxis, and other such hierarchical designations. Liberation theology neither negates the multi-dimensionality of the need for liberation, nor does it deny the situational emphasis of liberation, be it political, economic, spiritual, cultural, or educational. But we must keep in mind that any deep political struggle is a spiritual struggle at the same time. The school kids in Soweto with their slogan, "Afrikaans the language of the Oppressor" are fighting for cultural self-determination as well as for better housing, water, and electricity. To classify our needs into lower and higher orders is reactionary. We do not need first to be redeemed by an act of God, and only then go about the task of constructing a better world. The struggle is one because the need is one. "Choose life" is a single imperative and posits no special religious dimension which separates the imperative from other dimensions of liberation. Liberation is emancipation. Our need is to be redeemed for humanity's struggles; to abandon ourselves in a day-to-day betrayal of the class in which we were born, as Sartre puts it. Our social, political, and cultural needs for liberation are themselves spiritual needs. To distinguish or separate our need to be emancipated from our oppressors from our need to be reconciled with nature is dangerous because it decries the spiritual identity of the struggle itself.

Nicolai Berdyaev says that one's own hunger is a materialistic problem, while the hunger of one's neighbor is a spiritual one. In light of this the struggles for liberation do have their spiritual dimension. If one denies this spiritual quality immanent in the struggle, it becomes impossible to understand such recent events as the victory of the Vietnamese people over the strongest war machine of history or the Iranian revolution.

The third message I hear in Paul's text has reference to God and God's work. The basic assumption is that God needs us and will not liberate us without our participation. Liberation theology makes sense only if we understand this participatory quality of all liberation. Objects cannot be liberated; they can only be moved from a bad place to a better one. The concept of salvation through a God who sets us in a better place, and who is the agent of our liberation (our being the objects of the same action) is a concept which is plainly inadequate. Such a concept mirrors the oppression of the people, and reaffirms their powerlessness by celebrating the opium-like character of the bourgeois interpretation of the gospel.

Redemption is "the ever new event of God's own self-creation in response to the free self-creation of all his creatures." This way of defining the liberation event is derived from process thought, and indeed solves the problem of

the subject-object split that plagued existentialist theologians. But this same responsive process is at work within both redemption and emancipation. Both are unthinkable if we are mere objects. If this is the case, I see little reason to emphasize the distinction between emancipation and redemption. Both respond to the one need for liberation.

What we need is a life before death and not a life after death. We need to be free from the coercion to sin in our collective life. If forty-eight cents of one tax dollar goes to the military, then this socio-economic fact defines our need to seek liberation from this implicit coercion to sin. But should I talk to God the redeemer or to God the emancipator about that? God is one. We know of redemption and liberation only through our participation. There is nothing that God could give us without our involvement. To live means to participate. The groaning of the created universe causes us to be opened to participation in what has been called creation. If we realize the revelation of being as participating sons and daughters, then we become one with the liberating force in history as well as in nature. Our context calls upon us in a threefold sense. We are to listen to the cry, to name the need, and to participate in the struggle.

Notes

1. Martin Buber, *Tales of the Hassidim*, vol. 2 (New York: Schocken, 1947), p. 315.
2. Pier Paolo Pasolini, "Die Zerstörung der Kultur des Einzelnen durch die Konsumgesellschaft" (Berlin: Friedbeutenschriften, 1978).
3. Vladimir Ilych Lenin, *Selected Works*, vol. 2: *Notes to Hegel* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1960), p. 412.
4. Rudolf Bultmann, "Neues Testament und Mythologie," in *Kerygma und Mythos*, I, ed. H. W. Bartsch, 2nd ed. (Hamburg: Herbert Reich-Evangelischer Verlag, 1951), pp. 14-48.
5. Rudolf Bultmann, "Zum Problem der Entmythologisierung," in *Kerygma und Mythos*, II (Hamburg: Herbert Reich-Evangelischer Verlag, 1952), pp. 179-208.
6. Eduardo Galeano, *Schlachtnof der Worte* (Wuppertal, 1977).
7. Ernesto Cardenal, *The Gospel in Solentiname*, I, II, and III (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976, 1978, 1979).
8. Hans Magnus Enzensberger, *Landessprache* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1960).
9. Schubert M. Ogden, *Faith and Freedom: Toward a Theology of Liberation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), p. 83.

Nationalism and Economic Reform
Notes for the Free University discussion on 2nd June 1989

The expansionist phases of the Soviet sphere of influence imposed the system of Command Economy, introducing interlocking centralised mechanisms of control, command and reward. From the destructions of traditional communities in agricultural collectivisations, through the forced industrialisations of Central & Eastern Europe, peoples found themselves ruled by an oppressor which endlessly proclaimed its "internationalism". All public space being under occupation, individuals were thrown back on private conscience or enterprise (whether in just obtaining necessities of daily life or in black economy).

As the decay inherent in Command Economy's resource allocation became more critical, the Political rulers tried to draw on that entrepreneurial spirit while maintaining their domination. Command Economy in crisis displayed Comecons unequal exchange as part of the problem, requiring each Nation State to devise its own solution. As legitimacy has drained away, answers to the questions of what form should be taken by the community (nation / nationality) and what settlement should be sought between civil society and the existing powers, have been tending either to Free Market, to "proper" rule of law, or to a belief that national purity is sufficient alone to produce freedom.

The discussion is intended to take the *East European Supplement to Here & Now* 7/8 as its starting point. However, the rapidity of change is such that events reported on the news broadcasts may turn out to be more immediately relevant.

The extracts printed below are some additional material, illustrating, at the least, the changing rate expectation of change through the 1980s.

"One day someone will write a marvellous history book, it will explain why communism gave up the ghost. Why communism gave up the ghost in the 1980s rather than the 1970s or the 1990s. And why communism gave up the ghost at more or less the same time across the whole vast Eurasian land mass, from Wittenberg to Vladivostok and from the Arctic to the China Seas. (Those) ruling groups calling themselves communist parties have lost the battle of ideas. (We) need a new intellectual toolkit, or perhaps merely an old one, with concepts like representative government, the rule of law, the separation of powers, but also populism, nationalist demagogy, military dictatorship... There is no credible alternative between Eastern socialism and Western capitalism' Thus an activist of a liberal opposition party in Budapest last month... At the moment there seems to be no natural stopping-point... on the road from the command economy to the free-market one and from dictatorship to democracy."

(Timothy Garton Ash, "Communism Gives Up the Ghost", in *The Spectator*, 27/5/89)

"Is liberal capitalism versus genuine socialism a real alternative in Eastern Europe? Despite the fact that we are radical socialists, or perhaps because of it, if there were a real alternative, and if this were the only one, we would not hesitate to accept liberal capitalism as a relative progress. Since we do not regard the present régime as socialist, there would be no socialist achievements to lose, the workforce could gain liberties, Pluralism, and together with it the freedom of political life, could only grow. But there is no such alternative."

"Strange as it may sound, in countries where the population hate even the word socialism, there is no substantial social will to restore capitalism either. The cardinal evidence for this was provided by the Hungarian anti-Stalinist revolution of 1956... The streets were noisily but superficially dominated by Rightist groups, bloodthirsty Cold War anti-socialism at its most vulgar. Not even the words Left or socialism were tolerated. But the unanimously shared decision of the workers that neither factories nor land should be restored, cut both ways... The anti-authoritarian state subject of dictatorship over needs does not fight for a radical change in his situation in order to acquire a new master. Therefore dictatorship over needs versus liberal capitalism is not a real alternative."

In early 1919 Max Weber... warned Lukács that the audacious Russian experiment would bereave socialism of its reputation and authority for a hundred years. Let us conclude with the most optimistic sentence of this book; of these hundred, sixty years have already elapsed."

(Fenér, Heller & Márkus, Dictatorship Over Needs, 1983)

"My viewpoint comes from the anarchist, socialist, syndicalist tradition. I state this explicitly, as I know that this tradition has been forgotten during the 40 year hegemony by the Marxist concept. All critics of really-existing socialism, the revisionist reformists and the leftist 'conspirators', in the past took the System at its word. No longer, the new democratic opposition in Central/Eastern Europe is no longer Marxist (except perhaps in the DDR) and cannot be. Consequently, there's no common denominator between the ideology of the power and the opposition. In really-existing socialism, many ways can be envisaged for resolving social conflict, but not politics. Administrative and State decisions or individual solutions are possible, but not public confrontation of arguments and community interests, reflection and free and public decision. Without an agora (a public space), there is no political life, merely public administration space; naturally inefficient, negligent, corrupt and tyrannical."

(Gasper Miklos Tamas, from "Eye and Mind - Introduction to Politics", 1983)

"Stalinism mobilised the crowds; post-Stalinism neutralised them. Stalinism was ideological; post-Stalinism was pragmatic. National and revolutionary pathos was linked to the 1956 revolution; the Party had become the flag-bearer ... of the grey everyday. Individualism - naturally **not** civic pride and independant initiative - was tolerated. Kadar's smug authoritarianism has made political passion unfashionable, and added disillusionment, general cowardice called sobriety, oblivion called realism and some consumer delights. The régime achieved the considerable feat of convincing the Hungarians that their own shrewd and ingenuous passive resistance - dubbed the Second Economy - was the doing of their rulers. The crisis is a crisis of authority. Between the powers-that-be and the body politic there is a huge no-man's land. Changes occur, but against the will of the rulers. The name of this is **revolution**. This revolution is a glorious one, a profoundly conservative, pacific and lawful one. Why conservative? Because its aim is **law**. Even the Government's lawyers recognise today that Hungary is in a state of ex-lax, that is that there is no proper law system, the country is government by decree. They say openly that the Party's rule is illegitimate... and it is sustained only by naked force, 'geo-strategic necessity' (an allusion to Moscow) and unfortunate historic accident."

(Gasper Miklos Tamas, "The Hungarian Revolution", in The Spectator, 9/4/89)

"It is not possible to grasp the implications of the various national struggles in Eastern Europe today without relating these also to changing conceptions of 'Europe' as a whole; recent cultural and geopolitical discussions about 'Mitteleuropa' and the re-emergence of rival Franco-German perspectives about militarism and the German debates over 'post-conventional identity' are just instances of these larger developments. Does all nationalism aspire only to the creation of more states? Is the limit of the nationalist imagination the demand to be administered, regulated and oppressed in one's own language?"

("Eastern European Supplement Afterword" in Here & Now 7/8, February 1989)

RUSSIA: FOREMOST CANDIDATE FOR SOCIAL REVOLUTION
A Discussion between Cornelius Castoriadis and *INSTOK* Magazine

Истор: In the introduction to *Devant la Guerre* (1981) you wrote: "In thirty years, I haven't ceased believing what I restated in 1977: Among the industrialised countries, Russia remains the foremost candidate for a social revolution". This year, in a series of articles on the USSR published in *Libération*, you repeated this declaration without developing it. Could you detail your proposition?

Castoriadis: In speaking of Russia as the premier candidate for a social revolution among all the more or less industrialised countries, I meant that the régime's antinomies, such as they were established and then transformed by Khrushchev, Brezhnev and now Gorbachev, are such that one cannot conceive a gradual reform from above which could bring the Russian population to accept the reformed régime (in the manner in which western populations accept - to greater or lesser degrees, but mainly greater - the régimes of liberal oligarchy).

If something changes in Russia, my opinion is that the most probable is that it will take the form of an explosion. While I have no desire to speak of corpses and rivers of blood, viewing the Russian situation, for example the hatred of the bureaucrats (recall the 1956 Hungarians), one can ask what this explosion would be. Such an explosion signifies a mobilisation of the population; and, one hopes, the formation of autonomous organisations by the population, whether they be of the council type, true soviets, of some other type, the Solidarnosc type, or any other, but in every case representing an attempt at self-organisation by the population outside the régime's channels.

Истор: The main conflicts marking Soviet reality in recent years are more national than social. Doesn't the forceful return of the peripheral nationalities (Tatars, Armenians, Azari, Kazakh,...) run the risk of leading to uncontrollable crises, seen as insoluble by the central power?

Castoriadis: Certainly, the situation is critical, Gorbachev has to improvise. All the more as everything happening isn't just window-dressing. And it's not just window-dressing: at the level of information, in spite of all the mishaps seen concerning Armenia, the situation is nevertheless entirely different. Not the great mass of the population, but a certain number of social categories have begun to speak: intellectuals in Moscow, and perhaps also in provincial cities, certain nationalities, not all, the nationalities are starting to mobilise and to demand rights, and the range of rights cannot be limited. That can begin with the demand for an indigenous First and a Second Secretary of each Republic's Communist Party, passing through all the intermediate degrees up to the demand for total independence with the right of separation, or rather with effective separation. Faced with this nationalist mobilisation, one sees that there could well be a possible reaction in the centre of the population - I'm not even speaking of reactions at the heart of the military and bureaucratic apparatus, for that's obviously grist to the anti-Gorbachevian mill: "We told you so, You can't start allowing people to open their mouths without us being pushed further; and where will that stop?" This is certainly the conservatives' voice. It manifests itself, whether under the form of articles or letters, probably inspired. This discourse is found among part of the population. The risk that glasnost and perestroika endanger the great empire ("which remains our empire"), the Russian Empire, can act against the reform movement in the social classes which aren't bureaucratic classes.

Истор: Reflecting on the example of Moscow, one can say that glasnost has always favoured that strange current which is simultaneously conservative, ecologist and ultra-nationalist.

Castoriadis: Not just in the USSR. As Gany Conn-Bendit says, there is a German ecological fringe who are virtual Nazis, in the sense that they appeal to a return to the old Teutonic forest, to blood, to land, etc. But what interests me concerning Russia isn't such extremist fringes, but rather the wave of grand-Russian nationalism and identification with the idea of superpower empire which has developed. Carrère d'Encausse spoke of Siberian Muslims for whom at worst the empire can pass. The Caucasus, the Baltic republics aren't the same. If the Ukraine began to move, what would happen? Disintegration. All that is anticipated by a part of the apparatus. And certainly by Gorbachev himself. Moreover, you don't have to be a statesman to anticipate it. Some anticipate it by saying: "Stop while there's still time, before things go too far". Gorbachev - or rather, the Gorbachev group, discarding personalisation, even if Gorbachev himself is important - plays a balancing-act just now, he has to juggle on the high wire. All the more as, and this is the second aspect, all his so-called enterprises on the economic plane have as yet amounted to zero.

Истор: In the current context - I'm thinking as much of the many speculations on the Gorbachev reforms as of their real echo in the Soviet population - do you maintain the thesis that self-reform of the Soviet system would be impossible?

Castoriadis: Yes, that's the most probable thesis, the closest to reality. But there's no absolute necessity in history. Nothing can ever be excluded. I'd like to add something which I didn't say in the *Libé* article. I don't think, and have never thought, that what happens under Gorbachev would be sham to deceive the West. Deep necessity forces part of the bureaucracy to attempt reform. I don't see this attempt succeeding. Aside from any potential social explosion, the other scenarios - Gorbachev's resignation, or his being obliged to dilute his wine so that the attempt loses all significance - would leave their traces. Gorbachev is himself a product of the Khrushchev period. By that I mean that many people discovered many

things and these became the seeds for a later phase of Russian history, I consider that to be very important, as Khrushchev was important for what happened later.

Историк: In the USSR, the military has always been dominated by politics; its politics which formed militarism of the Soviet type, argues Jacques Sapir, who attacks you several times in his book *Le Système Militaire Soviétique* (1980).

Castoriadis: Yes, I'm vaguely aware of that argument, I don't really want to discuss it as I haven't yet read the book, but I'd say that politics dominated the military until Stalin's death and a little under Khrushchev, but why was Khrushchev deposed? Certainly because of Brezhnev's appeal to the army, taking Russian history as a whole, it's another matter, with the reformist tsars, Peter the Great, Catherine, each time things changed, it was military industry. The entire Europeanisation of Russia was driven by the bias of the military economy, Trotsky perceived this in 1905. That man had many faults, but I recently reread that text, written when he was 25, where he demonstrated that in Russia the bourgeoisie was a creation of the State. And all industry which ever existed was essentially promoted by the State as military industry, to support the clash with the Western military powers. Sapir's other argument, as I understand it, is shared with many others. Coming after my book was published, this argument is, in my opinion, entirely false, and consists of insisting on the technological inferiority of Soviet military material. That makes me smile, for such people don't discuss the reality of Western technology. If one reads the critiques (and it's true that they often come from the Right, but not exclusively) of Reagan's famous re-armament or of what happens in the USA, one appreciates that prototypes perform extraordinarily well, but constantly meet problems on the production-line or in training pilots in the planes, etc. The mythical supremacy of American technology is prolonged. Now, Soviet technology is certainly inferior, but sufficient to produce 40,000 tanks and I don't know how many 5,000, 6,000, 8,000 nuclear warheads. American technology is caught up in the mania for the perfect gadget which never works in practice; one produces, let's say, 8,000 helicopters and cannot find 8 which don't break down (e.g. the attempt to free the Iranian hostages). I'm not bemoaning this, merely observing, and that only from a technical viewpoint, not as a discussion point. Should there be war, it wouldn't take the form of a prolonged confrontation of technologies.

Историк: Democracy is the reference common to the majority of oppositionists in the countries of really-existing socialism. Such unanimity isn't without ambiguity and often rests upon a certain confusion about the content of democracy. Can you explain in a few words the distinction which you once evoked in a viewpoint published by *Le Monde*, between elective oligarchy and democracy?

Castoriadis: Democracy is self-government. The idea of representation as it exists in Western philosophy and political practice is a mystification. All permanent representative bodies tend in every way to perpetuate themselves and can establish only relations that all can only glimpse with the body which elected them. Today, it's caricatured with the theatricalisation of TV, but even in the past, uncontrolled representatives have always been driven to concentrate political power (or the fraction in society coming under political power, for there's also economic power), in such a way that elections are always, so to speak, rigged in advance. And then they exercise power. Today, one can see what this power is. It doesn't represent the people. Rather, power is the party machines and the tops of these machines. And if Barre doesn't count, that's because he has no apparatus. Democracy is self-government, self-institution, that is, the fact that the society organises itself to change its institutions when it judges this necessary without requiring a revolution each time. In a true democracy, legislative work and government would truly belong to concerned people. This implies, from this viewpoint, not the suppression of power but the suppression of the State as a bureaucratic apparatus separated from society.

Историк: In the contestation in the East, what corresponds to this kind of democracy?

Castoriadis: In Hungary in 1956 there was all the evidence of councils which continued to function during the first months of the Russian occupation, the workers' councils in the factories and elsewhere. In Poland, the situation was different. The Solidarnosc movement was a mélange. People had experienced a so-called revolution, so-called socialism, so-called collectivisation of the means of production, pseudo-radical change; and, by those peculiar movements which exist throughout history, as much at the social level as the individual level, one still found many Solidarnosc thinkers who envied the other side, declaring that they wanted a parliamentary republic.

The experience of an economic and political bureaucracy certainly makes people believe that one only has to institute a free market and establish a parliament and a republican constitution for everything to be better. Not to reach the earthly paradise, for they have discovered that it doesn't exist (we know this), which isn't to say that there can't be important change in society. The millenarian utopia of Marx or the old anarchists is one thing; the idea that history has ended, that the least bad form of society has been found in Western society, is another. No, history hasn't ended, one can do better than Western society, without that implying an earthly paradise. At the moment in Poland, I believe that Micznik and others are of this opinion, without always expressing it openly. And they are constrained by the pressure of other factors (the Russian army, among others).

Историк: In fact, there have already been ambiguous projects in Poland concerning the creation of a syndical chamber in parliament.

Castoriadis: What astonishes me is that people don't see that from the moment that one speaks of a parliamentary chamber or a syndical chamber, one reintroduces the essence of bureaucracy; the separation between rulers (*dirigeants*) and doers (*exécutants*). Some months ago I was in Budapest and heard the same story from people to whom I was very close and who I respected; I had been disagreeably surprised to see some tendency to import Western ideological produce. Again, the problems are not easy, and neither you nor me can resolve them, for they are at the level of the society and of it alone. For example, suppose that the shackles of the Russians, Jaruzelski and even the Party were broken, peacefully or as you wish; the country is economically in terrible chaos, the factories are supposedly nationalised, there must be a consumer goods market, people cannot be rationed and prices fixed, if I received 10,000 zloty each month and wished to waste my 10,000 zloty, buying Bach or Madonna records, that's my right, I cannot be told: 'No sir, you're entitled to a quarter of a Bach record each year.' That's the first problem, but the problem of the organisation of production is yet more considerable. I'd say to the Poles that there has to be a workers' management of production, management of production by workers' councils, formed not merely of manual workers but by all people in the factories; then a coordination of councils, etc. A true socialisation of production which must be equal, for all but large factories, with the end of all forced collectivisation, if the peasants wish to form cooperatives, all the better. But all that brings considerable problems. The questions are similar in Hungary, I'm leaving aside Rumania, for that's a catastrophe.

Историк: When considering the social movements in the East, the social and collective practises which appear at this or that moment, whether in Poland or in Hungary or even certain movements in Russia, one discovers an impressive match between the direct democracy which you describe and the practise of these movements. On the other hand, when politicisation occurs (that is, formulation of a project with global pretensions) and equally global ideological elements intervene, that stops sharply. Often that leads to a subproduct of what is current in the West, imitations aside. This describes a serious problem concerning the political result of democratic perspectives in these countries. The democratic perspective was never posed in terms of political and theoretical prolonging of "really existing" social movements. There is not yet a school or a current of thought to even take account of this original aspect of the contestatory dynamic in the East. There are experiences on the plane of methods and organisational forms but not on the theoretical level. Take the example of the Budapest School, composed of very strong and solid people who, when they theorise, actually align themselves with Western currents and participate in these currents, but they don't theorise the practises existing in their country.

Castoriadis: I entirely agree with your diagnosis. It also fell to me to oppose the Budapest School people, particularly when they wrote about 1956 on the 30th anniversary, criticising what I said in 1956 and in 1976 on this subject; that is, that Hungary had shown the way with the councils and all the rest. They wanted none of that, these are intellectuals who try to theorise, to rationalise and to ideologise all that, but they fell back into the schemas of the pretensions of Western political philosophy, with some additions. For example, any attempt at radical change in society leads inevitably to totalitarianism. That's a song now heard everywhere; I've heard enough of it.

Историк: You're referring to Agnes Heller...

Castoriadis: Partly to Heller, but particularly to Kolokowski. I find all that sad but don't see it as being at all accidental; it's the natural physiological bent of the intellectuals. For them, once again, an autonomous mass movement instituting itself as a government is incoherent. It's an underwater camel, a robber prince, a square circle. For them, history is reduced to proper names and to ideas. It's never the movement of the masses and the realisation of the masses. I believe this defect to be a professional infirmity of intellectuals.

Историк: The originality of political thought in the East rests, according to some, upon the importance accorded to ethics to the detriment of politics proper...

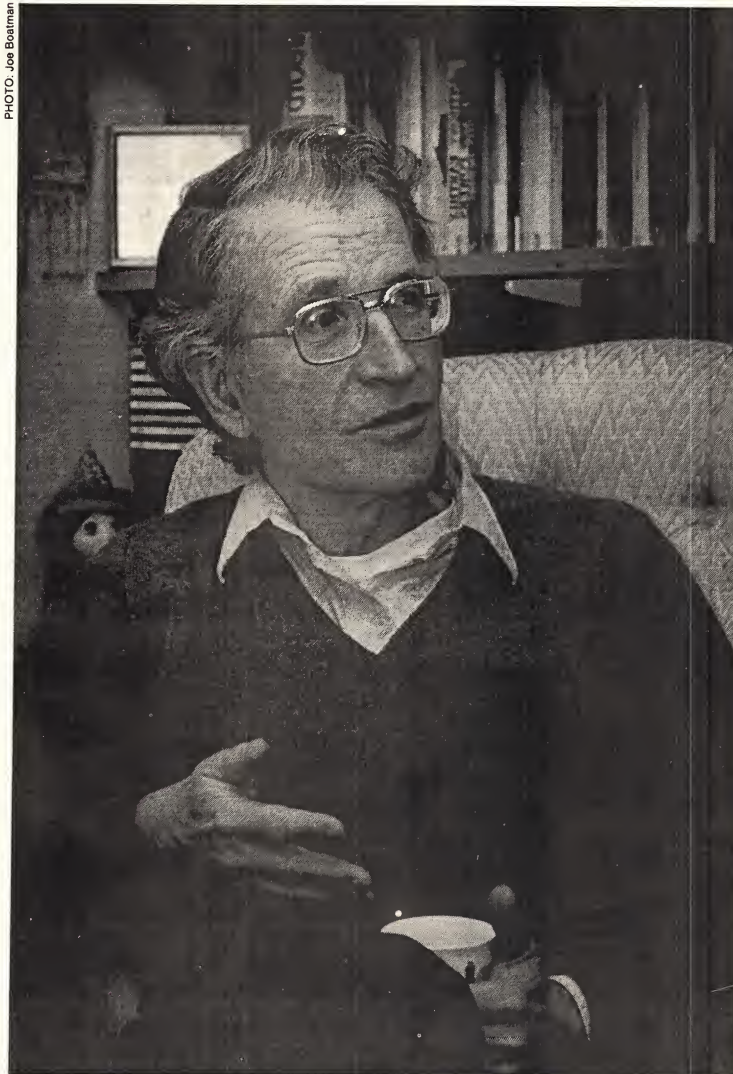
Castoriadis: I believe that it also becomes a kind of compensation for the absence of true political thought. One doesn't know what must be, but ethics tells us that in every case certain things must not be. To say that ethics replaces politics is an unparalleled stupidity.

From Историк no.16 (September 1988)

the gulf war

'Now the the free u

PHOTO: Joe Boatman



Daniel Nassim: What do you see as the most striking new features about America's intervention in the Gulf?

Noam Chomsky: One thing that's new in American foreign policy is that they are capable of deploying huge armies in the Gulf. And the reason they can do it now is that the Soviet deterrent has gone.

During the Cold War the Soviet Union was a regional power that used violence and terror around its borders, while the United States was carrying out violence and terrorism throughout the whole world. It is the first true global power in history. But it was to an extent deterred by the Soviet Union, because the Americans were often carrying out operations in areas where they did not have a large conventional force advantage. And that is dangerous if you run into a real adversary. What you would want to do is fight people who can't fight back. That's the way you become a war hero—you attack people who can't fight back.

But the trouble was the Russians could fight back. So they never got into a confrontation with the Russians because it was much too dangerous. Every confrontation in the world had a habit of escalating—especially in the Middle East. Every war, every Arab-Israeli war, or in Lebanon in 1958, carried with it the risk of superpower confrontation because they're just too close. For that reason there was always a limit on the use of American force. It was bad enough but it was limited because you had to ensure that you did not get into a confrontation with the Russians.

The Russians also gave economic support and sustenance to people the United States were trying to overthrow, like in Central America and Nicaragua. And that makes it harder to intervene. That's what's called 'Russian aggression' in the United States. If you buy Cuban sugar that's 'Russian aggression'.

Now the lid is off. The Russians are out of the game and you can do anything you want. There is free use

lid is off for se of force'

Professor Noam Chomsky has been one of the leading dissident voices in America during the Gulf crisis. Daniel Nassim asked him about his view of the war—and what comes next

of force. And this has been very well observed by American strategists. When the United States invaded Panama last year Elliot Abrams, who was in charge of Latin American policy for the Reagan administration, pointed out that this is a sort of historic event because it was the first time that the United States has been able to intervene without any concern whatsoever for the Soviet Union or the Soviet reaction in parts of the world.

That's one of the things you've seen in the Gulf that's new. The United States and Britain can put massive conventional forces in there and they can do anything they want because nobody can stop them. These are the two most violent powers on Earth today who are free to use their violence in any way they like and that's a change.

There are other changes. So, for example, this war and the Panama war are unique, at least since 1917, in that there is no pretence of it being a defence against the Russians. The pretence was always ludicrous but it was possible to construct when the United States invaded Grenada, for example, without people collapsing with laughter. But this time it can't even do that. That rhetorical structure has gone and new rhetorical structures are needed. In fact it's now openly conceded in the USA that the new enemy is the third world.

About March every year the White House presents to congress its propaganda, something called the National Strategic Strategy Report, which every year argues that we need an even bigger and more hi-tech military because we're facing an even greater bestiality than ever in history. Last year it was the same. But this time when they said they need a more hi-tech military it was because of the 'technological sophistication of third

world powers'. We need Star Wars because of the Middle East. They have to have the capacity to project force rapidly in the Middle East region and they said this is why we need the military crème de la crème—the first time they said it straight out, without talking about the Soviet threat.

So US foreign policy is different in the rhetorical framework and it's different in the freedom to use force.

Daniel Nassim: One result of the lessening of East-West tensions has been to bring the tensions between the Western powers themselves to the fore. How do you see the US resentment of Japanese and German 'foot-dragging' in relation to the Gulf?

Noam Chomsky: That's an interesting story. With America's economic decline, there has been a drift towards a kind of tripolar economic world. Out of this system comes a weakened United States, a strengthened Europe, Germany, and a strengthened Japan as an industrialised country.

Now as far as Germany and Japan 'foot-dragging'. The way it works in the United States is that there is a lot of Japan-bashing and very little German-bashing. And that is interesting because Japan's contributed more than Germany to the Gulf campaign, considerably more. And I think the reason for that is racism. You don't criticise the Germans because they are white, and blond, and blue-eyed. But the Japanese...

In the United States, they cannot recognise the fact that 'foot-dragging' means these countries just don't want the war. They're part of the world, and they want sanctions and diplomacy. Whereas the United

States and England are off the chart in the use of force. The fact of the matter is that Japan and Germany don't care very much if the United States disrupts its economy or not.

I think this gets right to the heart of the Gulf thing. England and the United States need economic support from the outside. And there are basically three sources of capital around. Number one is Germany, the other is Japan and neither of them is going to fall over themselves to help. And there's a third—petrodollars. If you can keep control of the petrodollars, investment income, that's a striking success.

In the fifties the capital from oil sales buttressed the British economy. By the 1970s it was the American economy. You don't in fact pay for the oil if you make sure that Kuwaiti investments run out of London and Saudi funds go into American banks. So the oil price rise since 1973 has been very beneficial to the United States and England economically, whereas Japan has had to pay more for oil imports. As soon as Japan could see what was happening they started to diversify energy; now they're right down to less than 60 per cent dependency on imported oil altogether, and a lot of that is not from the Gulf.

I think this helps to explain why it's the United States and Britain in the Gulf War and not anybody else. From Germany's point of view they would much rather Saddam Hussein influences oil production than Washington.

Daniel Nassim: As an outsider, what do you think about the role that Britain has played in the Gulf conflict?

Noam Chomsky: Britain has great illusions about its role in the world.



PHOTO: Simon Norfolk

Palestinians in Jordan demonstrate in support of Iraq

A high US official in the Kennedy administration, Dean Acheson, was once discussing how the United States would penetrate the Common Market and he said, well, 'England will be our lieutenant—the fashionable word is "partner"'. England has these enduring illusions about 'partnership'. What they don't realise is that their counterparts over there see it as a lieutenant, and will call them partner.

Britain latched on to the United States in the Cold War, as a way of recovering its imperial glory. That's part of the reason it was dragging its feet about the Common Market, because of the 'special relationship' with the Americans. That special relationship is now a servant. If Britain will supply troops and so on then that's fine with the United States.

Daniel Nassim: To move the discussion on slightly, how do you assess the impact of the Gulf on the United States' changing relationship with Israel?

Noam Chomsky: I don't believe it is changing. In fact my prediction is that if things work out the way the United States is planning—a reasonably decisive victory, and the Arab governments controlling their own populations—then the US relationship with Israel will be strengthened.

That relationship is not based on any love of Jews. It's based on a strategic conception of Israel as a

mercenary state. England is a lieutenant but Israel is a mercenary. The United States is a big power. Other countries may hire terrorists, like they hire Abu Nidal or somebody, but the United States hires terrorist states. That's very different. The Iran-Contra hearings brought out a fraction of all this stuff, showing a fantastic international terrorist network in which the components were states, not people: Taiwan and Israel and Saudi Arabia, and Britain was helping by training mercenaries and stuff. In that system Israel is very useful.

In the Iran-Contra hearings one official described Israel as 'another federal agency'. If you want something done you can rely on it. And there is every reason to expect that relationship to strengthen. That is one reason why the United States is pretty much opposed to a settlement to the Palestine conflict. Over the past 20 years the United States is literally alone in blocking a political settlement to that conflict. Just take a look at the votes in the United Nations, the last one was 151 to three. The United States, Israel and Dominica—who probably had their debt paid or something. It's basically the United States and Israel against the world. That in some ways is why the United States is opposed to an international conference. Bring anybody to that international conference except the United States and Israel and there's going to be pressure for a political settlement

which the USA doesn't want.

Two issues have come up in talks about the Gulf that the United States has blocked. One is Israel and Palestine. The other is weapons of mass destruction—and it's even more interesting in a way. The last Iraqi offer that was made public by US officials was total withdrawal in return for UN security council commitments of an unspecified kind relating to Arab-Israeli relations and weapons of mass destruction. But the United States is opposed to a diplomatic settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and also opposed to a diplomatic settlement of the issue of weapons of mass destruction. And we know this has nothing to do with Iraq invading Kuwait last August. Last April, when Saddam Hussein was still George Bush's favourite friend, Saddam offered to destroy his own chemical weapons. It was not a secret offer, he told a bunch of US senators. And since we were still friends at the time we responded. The state department welcomed Saddam Hussein's offer on weapons, but didn't want it tied to other weapons issues. Meaning we want Israel to retain its nuclear weapons but we'd be happy for Iraq to get rid of its chemical weapons.

That's US policy. To control the force. We have as much force as we like and our clients have as much force as we like.

Daniel Nassim: I would accept that Israel has played the role of a mercenary for the USA. But now

east and west

Noam Chomsky

'The real Cold War's not over'

Leading American writer

Noam Chomsky talked trans-Atlantic to Daniel Nassim about whether Nato and the American Century are

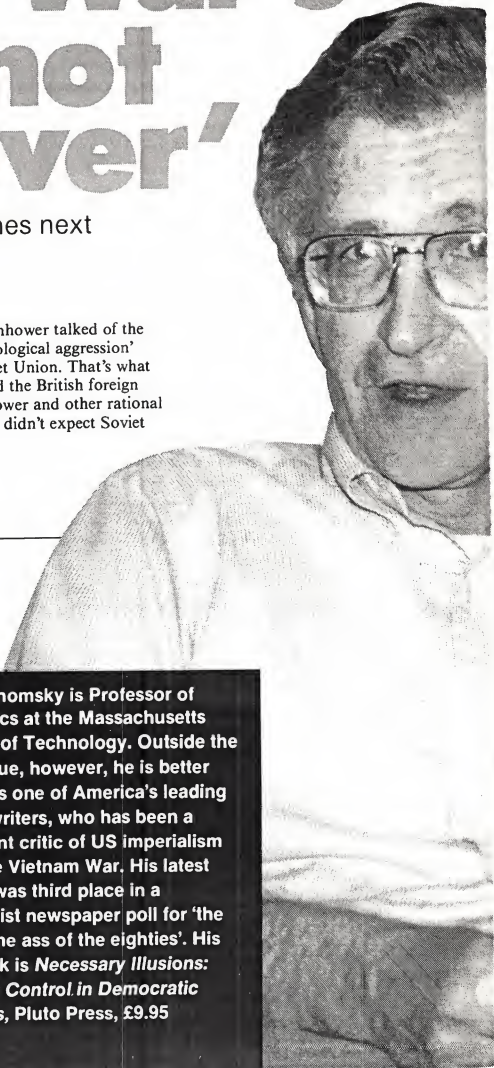
finished—and about what comes next

Daniel Nassim: The division between the Eastern and Western blocs has provided the framework for international relations for more than 40 years. What do you think are the likely implications of the end of the Cold War?

Noam Chomsky: First of all, my conception of the Cold War is different from the conventional one. After the Second World War the United States emerged as indisputably the world's strongest power. Its first goal was to reconstruct Germany and Japan and their periphery. The enemies would be rebuilt, but now subordinated to the United States rather than antagonistic to it, regional powers within a US-run global framework. The industrial societies needed a hinterland to exploit, what we call the third world. That was supposed to, as the state department put it, 'fulfil its functions' as a source of resources and markets and cheap labour for Europe, Japan and ultimately for the USA.

Now the Soviet Union was a problem. Firstly, the Soviet empire closed off from this global system a region which was mostly supposed to be exploitable third world. Secondly, although the Soviet Union wasn't much of an economic power, it had a lot of military force. It also had a good because of its primary role in overthrowing Nazism. People like

president Eisenhower talked of the danger of 'ideological aggression' from the Soviet Union. That's what really bothered the British foreign office, Eisenhower and other rational analysts. They didn't expect Soviet



Noam Chomsky is Professor of Linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Outside the Ivy League, however, he is better known as one of America's leading radical writers, who has been a consistent critic of US imperialism since the Vietnam War. His latest honour was third place in a neo-fascist newspaper poll for 'the pain in the ass of the eighties'. His new book is *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies*, Pluto Press, £9.95

troops to march into France. They were concerned with ideological aggression, the influence of the Soviet Union in helping maintain strong labour unions and other aspects of the resistance-based popular culture.

Thirdly, in later years the Soviet Union did provide a deterrent to the use of US power. As a global power the US carries out intervention and subversion in areas where it doesn't have a conventional force advantage—and that's dangerous. It meant that there was always the threat that third world intervention might blow up into superpower confrontation. Soviet power provided a deterrent, and the Soviet Union off-and-on would provide support for groups or states which the United States was trying to destroy. So there was a real basis for antagonism.

However, that's not the main function of the Cold War. For the Soviet Union the Cold War was about tanks and Berlin and Budapest and Prague and Afghanistan. And internally it meant the entrenchment of a certain system of military-bureaucratic power. For the United States the Cold War has meant intervention and subversion all over the world. And internally the entrenchment of a certain system of power, a mechanism of state industrial management which compels the public to pay the costs of

high-technology industry through the Pentagon system. The Cold War was also a device for maintaining a degree of influence and control over Europe and Japan, which were the real rivals.

Now that system hasn't ended. One side has called its half of the game off. But the other side hasn't. The Cold War from the US side has been largely a war against the third world, and a mechanism for retaining a degree of influence over its industrial rivals and, crucially, a mode of domestic social organisation. And nothing has changed in that respect. So the Cold War hasn't ended. The real Cold War hasn't vanished.

There are differences. The fact that one side has called the game off, at least temporarily, means that US military interventions require a different propaganda framework. So, for example, in the past it's always been possible when you invade Grenada or the Dominican Republic to say you were defending yourselves from the Russian threat. That's beyond the capacity of anybody's imagination at this point. The invasion of Panama was the first act of US subversion or aggression in many decades that wasn't justified by an alleged Soviet threat. It has a totally different propaganda framework.

Also the decline of the Soviet deterrent gives the United States more 'clout', as the state department put it. Because the United States' forward capacity to intervene is reinforced as the power of the Soviet deterrent declines.

So the Cold War will change in those respects. It's also impossible to pretend any more that Europe and Japan are just colonies that do what we tell them to do. The real world system which has been emerging for 20 years is tripartite, trilateral—Germany and its periphery, Japan, and the United States. The three are going to have problems. For instance, as the Soviet system collapses they're all trying to swoop on it in a parody of what they did to Mexico and Brazil. The question is who will pick up the spoils. Right now Germany is in the lead.

Daniel Nassim: You outline how there was an East-West conflict but not in the way it was conventionally understood. And you talk about rivalries between the Western powers. In the light of the past few months do you think you could say that East-West conflict was ever the primary source of tension in the world?

Noam Chomsky: It was the source of tension in one respect. It was the conflict that provided the greatest danger of total destruction, because of the threat that a third world conflict might turn into a superpower confrontation, which would mean

basically the end of history. And the concern over the Soviet Union was real because they were supporting targets of US attack and they just wouldn't open up their society to exploitation.

But I don't think it's been the major element in world affairs since the sixties. Since the early seventies it's been perfectly clear that the world has slowly moved towards this tripartite power system. And that the United States is going to have its problems and that although the Soviet Union is not a real competitor Europe and Japan are.

Daniel Nassim: I agree that Japan and Germany are becoming a threat to the United States' world power. What implications do you think that will have for international relations?

Noam Chomsky: If this was 40-50 years ago we'd have a global war. That's the kind of thing that world wars were fought over. There won't be this time, for two basic reasons.

One reason is that there's much more interpenetration of capital than there was. What's called Europe, Japan and the United States has a lesser meaning than it had in the past. For example, a large part of the negative trade balance of the United States is caused by US corporations exporting to the United States from abroad. And that interaction of free world international capital has created a very different kind of system. Capital does rely on individual state power, for regulation, for maintaining the workforce and so on. But much less than in the past.

The other thing is that international military conflict is simply inconceivable. Everyone who even has a brain cell alive knows that it would lose everything. So I don't think it's going to go the way it did in the past. But it will lead to serious economic conflict and, crucially, it will lead every one of these regions to attack its own population. Because to maintain the competitive edge, in a system of great power conflict, it is necessary to ensure the profitability of corporations—low wage levels and so on—and that's happening. What's called conservatism, or neo-liberalism, is happening all over the world, and is very advanced in the United States. Huge sectors of the country live in third world standards, real wages have been declining since the early seventies.

Daniel Nassim: I take the point that the world is a very different place from before the Second World War. And also that there is a large interpenetration of capital. But why do you think that this necessarily rules out a military conflict between the Western powers? For example, before the Second World War there



PHOTO: Sandra Iaroddy

'The United States didn't want Germany unified, it just wanted Nato'

were close economic links between Germany and the USA. But that didn't stop them going to war.

Noam Chomsky: There certainly were interconnections. Indirectly major American corporations—like General Motors—remained involved in German industry during the war, certainly through the early part. However, it's a matter of scale—the connections were much less. Just compare, say, US investment in Europe in 1935 and 1985; there's a qualitative difference. I think that capital is much less nationally based than 40 years ago.

I don't mean to suggest that it transcends the state system—it does not. For example, General Motors makes a huge amount of profit from overseas investment and is quite happy to export factories to cheap labour. Nevertheless it depends on the US government to ensure that the public subsidises its costs. And the US state has to have the power to use in case anybody gets in GM's way. So sure, these international corporations always depend on one or another state to ensure their health and power. But in a manner that is qualitatively different from, say, the 1930s. Plus the fact that they all understand now something that nobody understood then. That a war is simply unthinkable. They can't do it because everything they have would go.

Daniel Nassim: Looking at the changes in Europe, although it has expressed support for German reunification, the Bush administration didn't seem too happy about the fall of the Berlin Wall. How do you analyse the US attitude towards the German question?

Noam Chomsky: Well they've all been dragging their feet on it, particularly the United States. In fact the first reference to a wall that I know of is by George Kennan, who was one of the top architects of the post-war system back around 1946. He stated in internal documents that it would be necessary to 'wall off' Western Germany from Soviet influence. He didn't mean a wall of rocks and stones, but nevertheless the metaphor is suggestive and I think that's one element that led to partition.

Since the early fifties there have been repeated apparent possibilities for reunification. But that was rejected flat-out because the United States didn't want Germany unified, it just wanted Nato. That goes on right until today, when James Baker [US secretary of state] goes to Berlin he makes a speech about how 'you guys could be united, it would be wonderful, but you've got to stay within Nato'. The reason is that so

long as we have the pact system we've got the United States' clout.

One respect in which the United States is still overwhelmingly powerful is militarily. Therefore it has been pushing very hard for the maintenance of some form of pact system. They want the Warsaw Pact and Nato to remain, I think primarily to control Germany and Eastern Europe. But I don't think they can stop it. German nationalism is on the march and it's not very pretty. It's very frightening for anybody that knows a little history.

Daniel Nassim: The whole rationale for Nato's existence—maybe not what it was really about but the way it was justified—has been to contain the Soviet threat and to protect Western Europe. And now it's very obvious that there is no Soviet threat, what future is there for Nato?

Noam Chomsky: What Nato was about was imposing a certain form of interaction among the industrial societies through which, as Kissinger put it, the United States would maintain the overall framework within which other powers operate. And it was partly a way of imposing a social system on Europe in which labour would be subordinated. The radical-democratic thrust of resistance would be contained and the conservative order, including fascist collaborators and so on, would be reconstituted.

That was a real function of Nato and those functions are still alive. The only question is how you adjust to dealing with them now. You can't pretend that the Red Army is going to sweep over Europe. That's like the problem of how you invade Panama when you can't pretend that you're defending yourself from the Russians. My feeling is that Western propaganda systems are up to this. Just as they were in the case of Panama.

Daniel Nassim: Can you say a bit more about changing perceptions of the 'Soviet threat'? In the past the US authorities made a big propaganda point of attacking the Soviet Union. But in the last few months they've seemed very keen to prevent Gorbachev collapsing. Now, however, we have the widely discussed 'Z' document, arguing for a withdrawal of US support for Gorbachev. Do you think that this is a real option for US foreign policy?

Noam Chomsky: Well, you know, 'Z' is a kind of a current intellectual fad. On the intellectual level it's laughable. It's written by a very angry Soviet historian who sees everything in the West as practically communist. So it's all about how the Anglo-American Sovietologists with their

liberal-to-radical bias regarded Stalin as a democratic leader. But you can put all of that stuff aside. That's just hysteria.

There's only one sentence in that document that has any content. He says, being an ultra-right fanatic, that we shouldn't even support Gorbachev. But the one point of sanity in the document is in fact expressing the consensus of Western elites. It says that what we should support in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe are parallel structures. He says we shouldn't help them maintain their social system. Nothing that would maintain any welfare or state-run thing. That should go.

What we should construct is parallel structures, parallel systems, based solely on the market. Which are subject to IMF constraints, he says that explicitly, and which include free-trade zones for investment and so on. He says we should begin with this on the periphery of the system and gradually extend it towards the centre: 'Let's turn it into Mexico.'

The United States and Western Europe are very much in favour of the free market for the countries that they attempt to exploit. They would never accept it for themselves and never have. The successful industrial societies are the ones which throughout their history were protectionist, with state-integrated development and so on. A free market is fine rhetoric for attacking social programmes, but it's really intended for the victims. That's what the IMF is about, to try to impose on third world countries free market structures that the industrial societies would never tolerate for a moment.

So the 'Z' document says 'let's impose IMF constraints on East Europe'. And all Western elites agree on that. They would like to see Eastern Europe opened up to free exploitation. To be a place where you can put assembly plants, you can have tax havens, you can export pollution, all the standard third world facilities.

Daniel Nassim: I am sure that what you say about the 'Z' document itself is right, and that the West is trying to introduce capitalism into Eastern Europe. But what seems striking to me is how very worried they do seem about the Soviet Union collapsing.

Noam Chomsky: They are all in favour of turning the Soviet Union back into a third world exploitable country. The only question is how you do it. Now the 'Z' document says let's abandon Gorbachev and build parallel structures. There are others, who I think are more rational, who realise that kind of fanatical free marketism is going to lead to such

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disorder and chaos that the country won't even be exploitable. And they are the ones who prefer to do it through Gorbachev. Let Gorbachev step-by-step dismantle the system while we press to turn it into a standard third world society. The ideal would be to get it like the Philippines. There are real problems. If the Soviet Union breaks up into warring ethnic groups, nobody is going to be able to exploit it. Any more than you can exploit Lebanon.

Daniel Nassim: We mentioned how the United States has used the pretext of the Soviet threat to justify intervention in the third world. Now it cannot credibly do so, what implications do you think that will have for American foreign policy?

Noam Chomsky: Once it became impossible, no matter how crazed they were, for the United States to deny that the Soviet abandonment of international conflict was quite real, the question was what we do about it. And the immediate response was to say 'There are a lot of difficulties for us about what Gorbachev is doing in regard to the arms budget and so on. But there is a silver lining—that we can use military force more freely in the third world because the Soviet deterrent has declined'. And that's basically what Elliott Abrams [US assistant secretary for Latin American affairs] said again in the Panama invasion.

Furthermore, when people like the editorial writers for the *Washington Post* refer to Gorbachev's 'new thinking', what they mean is that Gorbachev will demonstrate that the new thinking is real if he stops supporting the targets of US attack. 'We'll only know if he's serious if he lets us have our way in the world without any impediment.' You can see a heightened self-confidence on the part of American leaders. They now are looking forward to being able to, say, reincorporate Cuba inside the US-dominated system. Because they're hoping that Gorbachev's new thinking is real and that he won't defend Cuba.

So it's not just a matter of military force, that's the least of it. Sane imperialists don't like the sight of blood because it makes them happy; the way they destroy and control third world countries is primarily economic. And I would imagine that the various forms of subversion will be used more freely. Of course there are other constraints. One constraint is the declining power of the United States relative to Europe and Japan. And Europe and Japan may be less inclined to let the United States have its own way.

Daniel Nassim: Do you think that, despite the constraints you mention

and despite all the talk of demilitarisation, the Panama invasion in some ways can be seen to represent the real dynamic in US foreign policy?

Noam Chomsky: I don't really think so. In the eighties, in Central America alone, maybe 200 000 people were slaughtered as a result of various kinds of US intervention in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. But if you look at the places where the United States was able to use *direct* force, you're talking about Grenada with a couple of dozen militiamen, or Libya which is totally defenceless against air attack, or Panama which is barely a country. I mean the United States could stage trial runs, operations in which they surrounded the Panama Defence Force, before the invasion.

American leaders understand that the public is not going to tolerate any real military action so they can only fight against people that can't fight back. And if somebody can't fight back, yes, then you can have a two-day attack where you run around striking heroic poses and that kind of thing. But all this kind of mock heroics isn't going to work if anybody can defend themselves. You'd have to do it by other means. By mercenary states, by subversion, by economic power, by international terrorism. So I don't really think that Panama is a model, much as American elites would like it to be, I don't think they have the capacity to do it.

There was a sense in which the Reaganites were kind of extreme. Their commitment to the use of violence and their love of violence and so on, that's not rational imperialism. And with the Bush administration US policy is moving more towards the natural mainstream, you use force when you have to. But there are often other devices which are much more effective and you use them where you can. So, take Nicaragua, economic strangulation, ideological warfare, a low-level terrorist threat would have been sufficient without sending out gangsters to torture children.

Daniel Nassim: What about the new thinking option? You described how the USA wants the Soviet Union to stop backing its third world opponents—which indeed it is doing. But it seems to me that they want to go even further, that there is talk of working together with the Soviets to contain what they call 'regional conflicts'. They'll work together, as they have in southern Africa, to try and stitch up deals in the third world.

Noam Chomsky: I don't think the Soviet Union is much of an actor in these regions. The way in which the

Soviet Union has been an actor in the third world has been to support certain groups or elements that the US is opposed to. So in southern Africa basically the whole game is in the hands of the United States and Europe. When they talk about the Soviet Union becoming a key player, or joining us, what they mean is stop giving any support to those regimes we want to get rid of, that's the Soviet role. For example, the United States would like to crush the PLO, and tell Syria to accept a regional settlement, which means Israel in control of the Golan Heights and so on. And the role of the Soviet Union is to withdraw. That's what's called 'cooperation'.

Daniel Nassim: Finally, a lot of the old assumptions have gone—the Soviet threat is no longer credible, Germany is reunifying and so on. Given these changes, what do you think the new dynamics are likely to be in international relations in the nineties? What areas of conflict are likely to emerge?

Noam Chomsky: The major area of conflict is going to be between the three global powers: the United States, a German-run Europe and Japan. And they're going to be in conflict over all sorts of things. Right now the conflict is over who has the advantage in exploiting the 'third world' opening up in Eastern Europe.

There's also going to remain what's called the North-South conflict, the methods to ensure that the traditional third world remains subordinated to the needs of the industrial societies. And that's always going to require intervention of one form or another. It varies as to whether it's military, economic, IMF procedures or whatever.

And there are also going to be increasingly severe class wars in the industrial societies. Maybe a one-sided class war, but that doesn't make it any less. There's got to be a consistent attack on the domestic populations, to ensure that each power of international business is able to compete.

Those are really the traditional conflicts. The only thing that has gone is that the Soviet Union is much less of a deterrent than it was in the past. It was never much, but now it's virtually nothing. And secondly the Soviet Union and its whole region is now itself opening up to exploitation and robbery. And the trilateral powers are emerging more clearly as rivals. So there's a lot of Japan-bashing in the United States. And if the EC gets its act together they'll be Europe-bashing. And the other way round too—Europe is going to have Japan-bashing. That's how it all goes.